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Ontario challenged to give token support to independent schools

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) has challenged the Ontario government to fund independent schools at the ridiculous level of one dollar per student per year for 1988-89.

The move calls the bluff of the government which says it wants to treat the issue of funding "in a fair and proper manner," as Premier Peterson expressed himself in a letter to CPJ on Feb. 16, 1988, while at the same time it says that the government doesn't have the money. The proposal was made by Gerald Vandezande, CPJ's Public Affairs Director, at a hearing of the

Select Committee on Education.

CPJ is pressing the issue at this time because the government has recently implemented full funding of Catholic schools, so now it can be said that the government discriminates unfairly against independent schools, the only sector which is not funded from taxes. Further, the government has on its table the report of the Shapiro Commission which has recommended independent school funding under certain conditions.

The total cost of this one-dollar-per-student funding for the year would be \$60,000, an almost invisible six ten-
See **STANDARD** -- p. 2

Manitoba cancer society wants to educate clergy

Marian Van Til

WINNIPEG — The Manitoba Division of the Canadian Cancer Society is sponsoring a conference next week for clergy — a surprising move, some might think, for a secular agency.

The interdenominational conference, to be held in Winnipeg, Oct. 6-7, will examine "The Spiritual Crisis of Cancer." The gathering is aimed at clergy or others who regularly relate to cancer patients, but is not intended for the general public. This is only the second year that such a meeting has been held.

"A lot of times, clergy visit or deal with cancer patients," notes Anita Tiessen, head of the Cancer Society's Public Relations Committee (Manitoba Division). "The disease affects people physically, emotionally and spiritually," Tiessen continues. "It makes people face their mortality and there's a grieving process involved. But clergy don't always know how to handle such crises."

So the conference's objective is to help church leaders support cancer patients, their families and friends, "at a time when [they may] feel uncomfortable in openly discussing

with a patient his/her frustrations, hopes and fears associated with [the disease]," says the cancer society.

A second goal is to widely disseminate this information. The training material on how to properly minister to cancer patients will be brought back by the priests and ministers to other leaders within their own denominations, the society hopes.

Listening is the key

When the society talks of "the spiritual crisis of cancer," it means
See **WORDS** -- p. 2.

The Spiritual Crisis of CANCER

An interdenominational conference for Winnipeg clergy

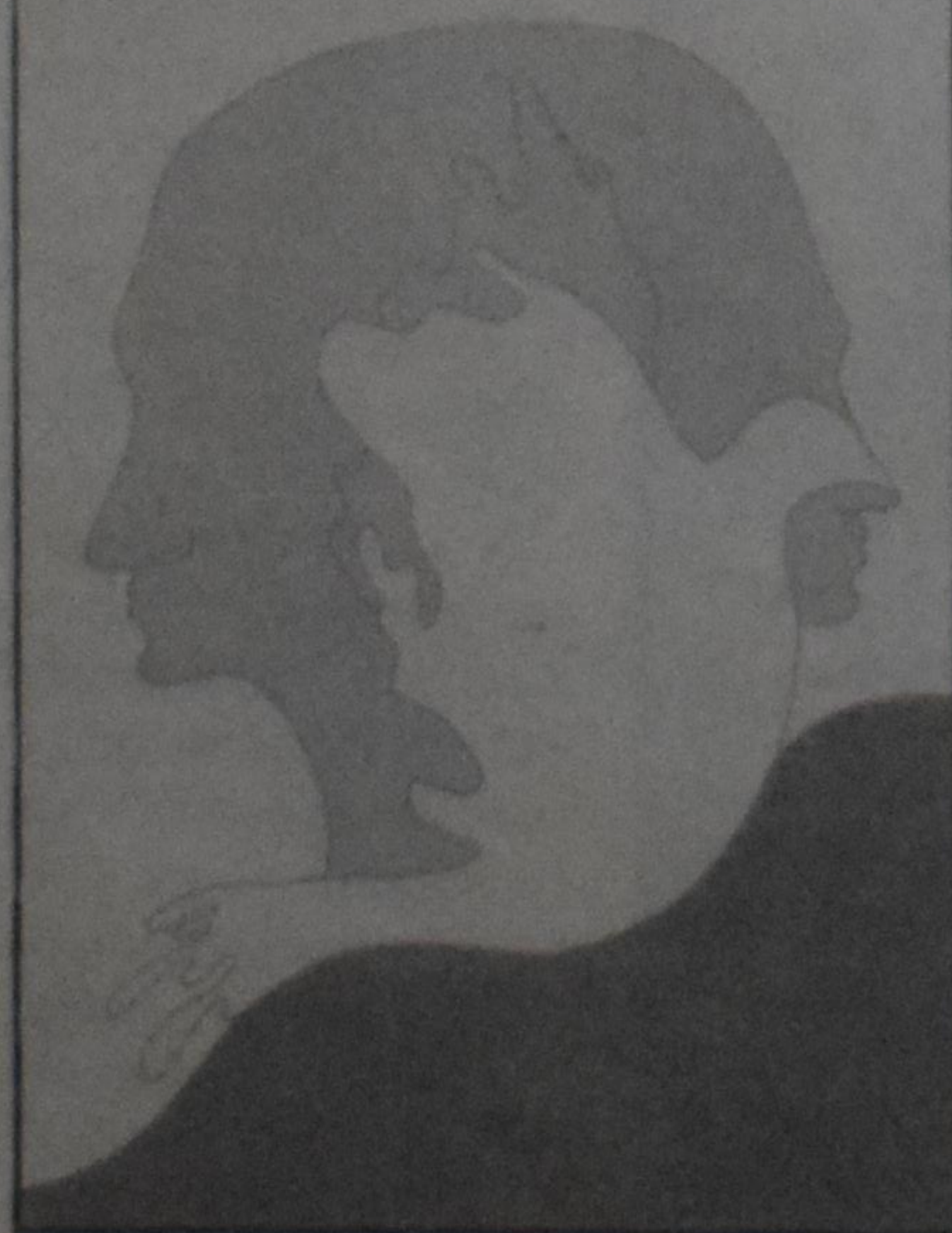


Photo: CCS (Manitoba Division) conference logo

The Canadian Cancer Society is recognizing the spiritual needs of cancer patients.

Thinkbit

Jesus has called us to faith and to evangelize others toward faith. He also prayed for our unity as his disciples. When we are divisive, argumentative or negatively critical with or about one another, we undermine the very power that we have received in abundance from God — the power to work in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration.
Joseph Cardinal Bernardin
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago

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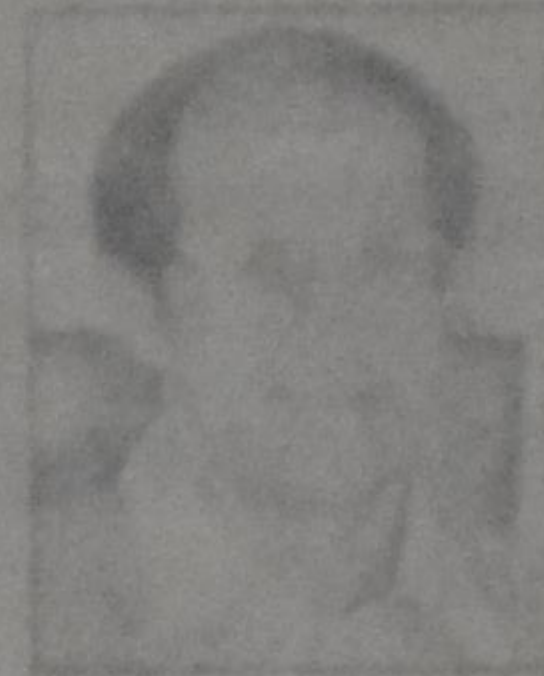
SEP 30 1988

Christian party moves full steam ahead

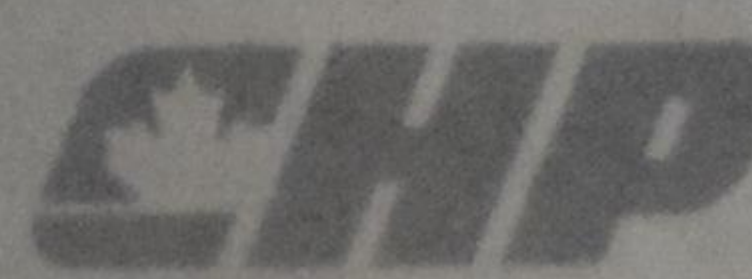
"OUR FIRST CANDIDATES . . ."



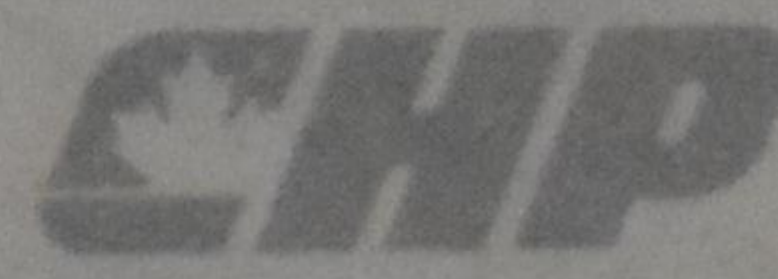
DAVID REIMER
Windsor (Ontario)



HANS STRIKWERDA
Oxford (Ontario)



ED VANWOUDENBERG
Fraser Valley (B.C.)



RAY PENNINGS
Hamilton-Wentworth (Ontario)



ALLAN JAMES
Kent (Ontario)



CHARLES CAVILLA
Leithbridge (Alberta)

FOR A NEW DIRECTION UNDER RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP"

Photo: CHP of Canada Newsletter

The first six candidates the Christian Heritage Party is readying for the next election.

Bert Witvoet

BURLINGTON, Ont — The upcoming federal election in Canada will be the best thing that could happen to the Christian Heritage Party, according to CHP Media Director Michael Van Pelt. It will give a higher profile to the party, it will strengthen its organization and it will give the party an opportunity to educate the Canadian public on its policies.

"We're going to be surprised and the people of Canada are going to be surprised when they see the positive showing of the CHP," Van Pelt predicts.

What excites Van Pelt in particular is the way local ridings are developing their organizations and nominating their candidates. At present, 30 candidates have been nominated, with new ones coming in every week. CHP expects to field more than 50 candidates in the next election.

Financial strength

Fifty is the magical number required to complete the registration of CHP as a national party. Once that number has been achieved, donations to the party can be used as tax credits by donors. This is important, says Van Pelt, to strengthen the financial basis of the organization.

It's a surprise to many political observers, he says, when they're told that the Hamilton-Wentworth riding, for example, has adopted a budget of \$65,000 and that half of that money has already been pledged. If the budget is met, as expected, the riding will have \$45,000 to spend during the election, which is the maximum allowed, and

\$20,000 for pre-election costs.

According to Van Pelt, Progressive Conservative associations are usually able to raise that amount but several New Democratic Party riding associations don't have that kind of financial backing.

Quality candidates

Van Pelt is excited about the fact that several high calibre candidates are running in some key ridings. He mentioned Teresa Ferri, a 35-year-old lawyer who will be running against Maureen MacTeer in the Carlton-Gloucester riding near Ottawa. "We did not target this riding when we aimed for 50 candidates," says Van Pelt. "It was just an organization that developed strongly."

In Niagara Falls, Bill Andres, former Liberal Member of Parliament, has declared himself willing to run for the CHP. Andres used to represent the Lincoln riding in the Niagara peninsula. He is a member of the Mennonite community and is hoping to draw wide support from a region that still has a large rural component, with many family-oriented churches.

See **GOVERNMENT** -- p. 2.

In this issue:

Adrian Peetoom loves organs but they breed lethargy. p. 9
"The Megabyte Minister" has a lesson for us, if we're listening. . p. 10
Further follow up on "An Interview with 'Susan'". p. 12

News

Government by principle

... continued from p. 1
The CHP is going to field candidates who will oppose high-profile candidates like Flora MacDonald and Joe Clark. Terry Marshall, "a young man from the computer industry," is running in Kingston and the Islands, a riding that has for years been represented by Flora MacDonald. John Torringa, with the correctional services in

Alberta and a former PC organizer, will face his former friend, Joe Clark, in the Yellowhead riding. Apart from the fact that Van Pelt predicts positive electoral results, he expects the CHP to get the message across to Canadians that there is an alternative to politics-by-Gallup-poll. "We tell people that we will make decisions on the basis of principles, not on

the basis of public opinion or pressure groups," he says. What those principles are have been spelled out by national leader Ed VanWoudenberg in speeches across the country and by policies that were adopted at the party's first national convention in 1987, Van Pelt explains. "VanWoudenberg always stresses that he wants Canada to return to its Judeo-

Christian heritage, and that we should apply the principles of this heritage to legislation." According to Van Pelt, policies of the party include provisions for daycare, for example, which are fair to single mothers, the poor, and mothers who stay at home. He says that candidate Ray Pennings (Hamilton-Wentworth) has found a willing reception for such

policies among constituents in his riding. Van Pelt calls his party an "open, grassroots party," in which officials do not have a vote and the policies of which can be challenged and reworked at a future convention in 1989.

Standard for quality education

... continued from p. 1
thousandth of one per cent of the nearly \$10-billion Ontario spends on education in one year. The suggestion is virtually an insult to the government of the nation's wealthiest province at a time of booming economy. When M.P.P. Doug Reycraft asked Vandezande whether schools would be insulted by such a trifling payment, his response was that

they would not be, provided that they could see the move as an expression of the government's desire to provide funding, together with the expectation that appropriate funding would come as soon as it could be put into the education budget. To head off government concerns about possibly funding independent schools that did not offer solid education, CPJ requested that

the Ministry of Education formulate criteria for "satisfactory instruction" which all schools in the province, including independent schools, would need to meet. A suggested draft of such criteria has been presented to the government earlier jointly by CPJ, the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools and others. In standing up to arguments

of lack of money and questionable educational quality, CPJ pleaded for conditions of public justice in Ontario that will provide equal "educational opportunity for all students and for all faith and value communities, regardless of creed, ideology, philosophy or religion." To make equal educational opportunity available, all schools would need comparable funding. The Select Committee on

Education was appointed in February to consider and report "on the role of the formal elementary and secondary school system in the successful transition of young students to adulthood in Ontario." It is holding public hearings and is expected to report early in 1989.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Gus Polman, Richard Vanderkloet, William van Geest, Clarence Joldersma

Pointing Fingers

"... *Yep, we have met the enemy and he is us ...*" — Pogo

A major feature of most discussions about environmental pollution is the laying of blame. Most private citizens blame industry for air pollution. Or, urban dwellers believe farmers pollute streams and rivers. Rural people marvel at the mounds of waste generated by city folks. Almost everyone blames the government for not stopping the "bad guys" from ruining our environment. Almost no-one blames him or herself for the continual crises caused by pollution. Not many people have agreed with (the comic-strip character) Pogo's analysis on this matter.

There is a different way of asking the same question. What attitudes cause people to be polluters and where have those attitudes come from? Putting the question this way helps avoid fingering people as such and instead gives each of us occasion to look inside ourselves for the answer. It also allows us to examine the historical roots of our attitudes towards the use of nature and the environment.

One person who has investigated the origins of our western society's attitudes toward nature and its use is the historian Lynn White jr. In his now classical article "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis" he examines the history of that attitude. His analysis is startling if not upsetting, especially for Christians.

White gives the example of the "Frisians and Hollanders" reclaiming land from the sea. He asks which, if any, animal or plant species have become extinct in that process. In his words, "In their epic combat with Neptune [the sea] have the Netherlanders overlooked ecological value in such a way that the quality of human life has suffered?" He cannot find that question being asked in the last 400 years, let alone answered.

Attitude of superiority

Not asking that question is a symptom of our (western society's) attitude towards nature, the

non-human world, according to White. We have an attitude that separates humans from nature, that makes us think that we are not a part of it. The western world has an attitude that justifies exploitation of nature on the grounds that "that's what it's there for after all." Humans are justified in using and abusing the non-human world because our task is to become master of it.

This attitude, says White, can be traced back to none other than the Christian religion. Christianity, he says (and he counts himself as a Christian), has brought in and fostered the attitude that man has "rightful mastery" over nature. Man "is not simply part of nature; he is made in God's image." As such, humans share in God's transcendence over nature. And thus, "God planned everything for man's benefit and rule; no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purpose." This, in Reformed circles, is (roughly) known as the cultural mandate.

The result of this attitude is, says White, a feeling of superiority towards nature, holding it in contempt, using it for our slightest whim. Examples of these whims abound: gas-guzzling cars, paper plates, scented toilet paper, automatic garage door openers. Our whims show a disregard and contempt for nature, says White.

Is White accurate in his analysis? Does he lay the blame for the environmental crisis in the right lap? Should Christianity "bear a huge burden of guilt?"

Reformed Christians will recognize that White is correct on at least one score. He, as few others in our society do, realizes that the problem in its root is a religious one. He recognizes the religious source of environmental pollution, this insight forces Christians to seriously examine his claim. But is White right? Has he found the enemy, and discovered it is us?

Clarence Joldersma is a science teacher at Smithville District Christian High School in Smithville, Ont.

Words from patients and doctors

... continued from p. 1
"spiritual in the broadest sense," says Tiessen. "The goal is not first of all to convert people, but to *listen* — whether they want to talk about metaphysical questions or immediate pain."

Next week's conference in Winnipeg is a direct result of educational work the Manitoba Division of the Canadian Cancer Society has been doing in the last three years.

In 1986, the Manitoba society produced "a resource for Canadian clergy" entitled "The Spiritual Crisis of Cancer," which was distributed Canada-wide. That, says Tiessen, was "the first step in addressing a definite need in providing information for clergy to better deal with cancer patients."

Based on response to the booklet, the Manitoba division decided something more was needed. Out of that need, a conference for rural clergy was developed and was held last year outside of Winnipeg. There were 93 enthusiastic conferees who were unanimous in opinion that professional help in dealing with the spiritual crisis that cancer so often evokes was long overdue.

Next week's broader-based conference will further address that need. Major presentations will be videotaped and will be available as part of a training package for clergy. The presentations will include speakers, panels, group discussions, a video entitled, "Images of Surviving," and a film, "Reflections on Suffering." Dr. Keith Jones of the

Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation will present "Medical Cancer Facts," to which participants may respond with questions. A panel of Cancer Society Patient Services Volunteers (cancer patients who volunteer to help other cancer patients) will present "My Cancer Story."

Three principal speakers, all involved in hospital and/or research work, will focus on what constitutes quality pastoral care, the nature and stages of cancer, cancer treatment (including "unorthodox" treatment), and answering questions about palliative care-giving.

Though the Canadian Cancer Society has divisions in every province, the Manitoba Division is, so far, the only one to offer such a program.

Teresa McPhail of the Cancer Information Service in Hamilton, Ontario, (which answers all cancer-related questions via a toll-free number) agrees that the need is there, but "not much is being done" to address it in Ontario or, as far as she knows, other provinces outside of Manitoba.

An ad in Calvinist Contact gets results! Place your's NOW!!

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



The national press went into a thorough discussion of Mrs. Turner's choice of toilet bowl brushes when Weston's book *Reign of Error* appeared on the bookstands, and Monsieur Mulroney went indeed to Madame Sauve, not to dissolve the House, however, but to do a minor, politically motivated, cabinet shuffle. Monsieur Mulroney, is nervous about pulling the plug on his government. It is, after all, the first time he is faced with that task. Anything you do for the first time does not come easy. The fact that the Tories are ahead in the polls for the first time in two-and-a-half years should make it a little easier.

★★★★★
The creation of a Ministry of Forests — forgive my scepticism — may have had as much to do with potential votes in British Columbia as with the preservation of our resources there. A Ministry of Housing was eyed with a bit of apprehension by the provinces in whose jurisdiction those concerns are traditionally administered. It may, however, find favourable voter response in our overcrowded cities.

★★★★★
Our Minister for External Affairs, the Honourable Mr. Clark, put his 10½-size foot squarely in his mouth once more as he roundly contradicted Monsieur Mulroney on the subject of acid rain. Monsieur, in his customary manner praised the U.S. on its co-operation with Canada, while Mr. Clark said that that co-operation amounted to zip, zero, zilch. That wasn't much of a secret anyway. We know that Monsieur often gets carried away a bit when he sings the praises of Mr. Reagan's administration. When Irish eyes are smiling in two-part harmony, what is a couple of million tons of acid rain between friends, eh?

★★★★★
Our Minister of Trade is not what you would call a polished diplomat. He sure can turn on the sarcasm, but in the three-piece striped suit company of international diplomats the often barbarous barbs that sometimes characterize the debates in the House of Commons are not accepted language. Mr. Crosbie experienced that when his audience of representatives of the European Community walked out on him during a dinner in Ottawa. Embarrassing! The French government broke off the fishing negotiations in

response.

★★★★★
Polarization in the United Church continues to deepen around the issue of the recent decision of that church's General Council. Concerned members are organizing themselves. John G.S. Knox, former board chairman of the United Church, urges in the Religion-section of the Whig-Standard that "not one cent of their (concerned members) givings to the church reaches either national or conference headquarters." Protestant denominations are getting top heavy, too hierarchical, too far removed from the rank and file in the pew, and this will always cause secessions. What we all need is de-centralization, as well as God's gracious help in keeping the unity of faith, hope and love.

★★★★★
And then there was our no-smile, conscientious, hard working Minister of Health, Jake Epp, who said that one in eight Canadians face a mental health problem some time in their life, and he wants to help us. Isn't that nice? So if you cannot sleep from worrying about the higher interest rates, or about the fact that the government in Ottawa spent \$138-million more than it collected in May of this year,

write Mr. Epp, and he will send you a tape of one of his speeches. Listening to that is sure to put you to sleep for at least eight hours.

★★★★★
Dukakis and Bush slug it out with "I-am-better-than-you" speeches. Who are we to stick our nose into our neighbour's business? It does seem, however, that Dukakis is more in touch with the acid rain problem than Bush.

★★★★★
Generals! Don't ever trust them except when they are retired, and then only as far as you can see them. They staged coups in Burma and Haiti, and of course, promised return to stability and prosperity. It was the generals who brought poverty to those countries in the first place.

★★★★★
Millions, probably billions of people watched the opening of the Olympic Games in Seoul. It was indeed a spectacular show. Harmony seemed to be the key word. Wished we had a bit of it. Harmony is often achieved with riot police, tear gas and water canons.

★★★★★
A man in Ohio spent \$3,700 to warn people that the Lord would come back in the past week. His prediction had a lot to do with a book of a former NASA rocket engineer, Edgar Wisenart, who used mathematical calculations to pinpoint the date of Jesus' return. I am always amazed when people suspect that God revealed himself in mathematical riddles.

Weekly Crossword

by Roger Coburn

ACROSS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Canvas cover													
5 Treaty													
9 Ipso —													
14 Ersatz butter													
15 Gen. Bradley													
16 Indian missile													
17 Palaver													
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36 Alencon e.g.													
38 Diamond Blue													
39 Mining sites													
41 "Happy Days" hangout													
43 Custom													
44 Fastener													
46 Spaces													
47 Frothy													
49 Coin													
51 God of love													
53 Eroding													
57 Lunch places													
62 Rare bird													
63 Keen													
64 Monogram part: abbr.													
65 Exhibited													
66 Stir													
67 Goliwogg													
68 Jealousy's cousin													
69 Passover feast													
70 —do-well													
71 Regrets													
DOWN													
1 Sum													
2 Winged													
3 Southern signature													
4 Wooden countenances													
5 Hair dressing													
6 "— for All Seasons"													
7 Shaw comedy													
8 Lock													
9 Agent													
10 A Guthrie													
11 Curmudgeon													
12 Raced													
13 Was obliged													
22 Aquatic mammal													
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27 Famous lioness													
29 Utopian place													
30 Peevishness													
31 Egyptian lizard													
32 Colleen													
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34 Mr. Wiesel													
35 Computer input													
37 Ann or May Verse													
40 feature													
42 Zola heroine													
45 Snare													
48 Shred													
50 Squatter													
52 Hunter of the stars													
54 Turk. president													
55 Guts													
58 Zane and Jane													
57 Vehicles													
58 Plant used in medicine													
59 Vendetta													
60 Gaelic													
61 Eng. river													

Last Week's Puzzle

SCOTS	ABED	HOE
OHARE	NOLA	NEAR
PETIT	TRAM	EARN
THETWINTOWERS		
SEE	ENID	
HSN	EDDA	TIARA
ETO	GALA	HELOT
DOUBLEDECKERBUS		
GORAL	ARNE	ATE
ELIZA	TENS	NEA
ONUS	YOU	
TWOONTHEAISLE		
SOAK	IRIS	RUINS
ARIA	TART	ERATO
GET	RPEE	EYRES

The *Washington Post* carried an astute observation on the issue of free trade. It noticed that there is in Canada a tradition of uneasiness about being folded into the United States, and it continued to state: "The reality is that the rapid development of world markets is eroding the economic independence of countries, including the biggest and richest of them."

★★★★★
The world watched in awe as hurricane Gilbert unleashed its destructive power on territories already marked by poverty. The international community offered relief in spontaneous reaction. "You know how to give good gifts", our Lord said. Now what about relief for the hungry in Sudan?

★★★★★
The *Ottawa Citizen* is a politically well-informed paper with a national reputation. It

also carries some strange ads from time to time. Let me quote a few:

Lady seeks intelligent male companion around 45. No civil servants.

And then this one:
Hunting cabins, Hemmingford area. No licence required. Shoot farm children, farm animals. Box M3130.

Here is the absolute last one:
Lady who likes to talk, drink reasonably, have a pleasant time, wishes to meet a gentleman who likes to talk, drink reasonably, have a pleasant time. Purpose: talk, drink reasonably, and have a pleasant time. Box 153.
Only in Ottawa, you say. Pity!

Carl Tuyl is the pastor of the First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ont.

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I believe “Susan”

Several readers have, by telephoning me or sending letters, some not meant for publication, expressed their disbelief in “Susan’s” story. They believe that Susan fabricated it. After all, did she not suffer from mental and emotional disorders? How did I know that one of her personalities had not invented these bizarre events. How could I throw a cloak of ignomy over a respected pastor? They let me know in no uncertain terms that, according to them, I had committed a terrible blunder by publishing Susan’s story.

Perhaps I ought to take this opportunity to explain why I believe Susan. I personally don’t know Susan. I have talked with her over the phone, but I have never met her. I don’t know the family either. Yet I fully believe in my heart that Susan is, what one pastor called, “a truth teller.” The story itself rang true.

Initial verification

But that for the sake of publishing the story was not good enough. I asked for and got two character references from Susan. One was her present pastor; the other, a trusted member of her congregation. Both of them knew of Susan’s history of incest and multiple personalities, and both affirmed that she was telling the truth. Both of them have known her for the past five years. Patricia Westerhof-Nyman, the interviewer, also knows Susan personally and believes her story.

Furthermore, I asked three Christian counsellors to read the story. All three of them believed the story and said that it made sense to them. One counsellor while reading the story said, “Aha, I was wondering when the multiple personalities would be mentioned.” He fully expected a person who had gone through such traumatic experiences to develop this disorder. Another counsellor told me, “When a woman describes her own experience of incest in detail, she is not making it up. She is telling the truth.”

Additional verification

After I had published the story, I had a conversation with one of Susan’s former pastors. He too told me that he is convinced that Susan’s story is fundamentally true. Sexual abuse is nearly always at the root of multiple personalities, he said. He has in his possession seven volumes of notes written by Susan over the years, which he hopes to use for writing a novel. The pastor’s wife has seen the scars on Susan’s body in the areas that Susan described. According to Susan’s father, these wounds were self-inflicted. This was partly true, said the pastor, because her father had forced her to cut herself.

There may be details in her story that are not entirely correct, he added, because her disorder also affects her memory. There are gaps in her memory. This pastor furthermore urged me to contact one of the detectives who had helped prepare Susan’s case for the preliminary hearing.

Following his advice, I talked to the detective, who is an elder in a church of a Reformed denomination. This man said that he was convinced that Susan had been telling the truth. He based this first of all on his many years of police work which had enabled him to develop reliable instincts about who is telling the truth and who is not. But in the course of his case work he had uncovered several clues that pointed to the man’s guilt. Some of these he shared with me, some he was not at liberty to divulge. However, since the case never came to trial, none of these could be pursued in an actual courtroom.

He told me that another detective who had been on the case, also a Christian, is equally convinced that Susan’s story is true.

Editorial

All of this I share with readers to let them know that I have carefully considered the matter of the veracity of Susan’s story. But at the bottom of it all is my own belief that Susan is telling the truth.

I believe victims

Over the years, I have come to believe that closed systems produce oppression and abuse. Prisons are closed systems; dictatorships are closed systems; authoritative churches and families are closed systems.

I have come to believe victims in these closed systems more than their oppressors. Victims are freer to speak the truth since they have nothing to lose by doing so. They may experience greater hardship and persecution because of it, but often they are willing to pay the price. Oppressors, on the other hand, have everything to lose by telling the truth. (In reality, they too have nothing to lose except the chains of their abusive nature.) *Of course* they will deny their acts of oppression and abuse.

I realize that victims at times lack objectivity when they describe their situation. They are not always able to measure the extent of the oppressor’s actions. But they are never wrong about the evil that tries to choke the life out of them. I implicitly trust them in that. That’s why I believe prisoners when they tell me that their dignity and humanity is daily assaulted. That is why I believe the common people in Latin America and South Africa (not necessarily the ideologues who exploit their situation in the name of freedom). I believe these common folk when they tell their tales of horror under a dictatorship.

And that is why in my heart of hearts, I believe Susan.

BW

Note: See pages 12 and 13 for more material on our incest coverage.

Letters

Thank God for counsellors

Lately I hear a lot of talk about how bad counselling is and how bad hypnosis is and trances are. These statements make me sad, and at the same time they worry me. If I did not have a Christian counsellor, I would not have been able to climb out of the dark pit called “the past.”

Many Christians don’t hesitate for one moment to go to an orthopedic surgeon when they suffer from a complicated bone fracture, or to go to a heart specialist for heart trouble. But when there is an emotional breakdown, you are told to “pray and forget about it.” In their minds God uses human beings in the form of doctors to heal bodily ailments, but with emotional breakdown God is not able to find any human capable enough.

Thank God, I found out in time how wrong they are. Thank God for Christian counsellors. Thank God for pastors who are able to listen and share in the pain.

Thank God for healing tools like

trance and hypnosis. Yes, they are also used for evil, and *that* is wrong. Just as sex was given to be beautiful, you just have to read the papers or talk to sexually abused men, women and children (yes, children) to know how evil that can become. But the evil use does not cancel out the good use. Thank God for the good use of hypnosis and for Christian counselling.

Name withheld,
(An incest survivor)

Admiration for “Susan”

You are to be commended for printing the article on “Susan” and everything she has been through. I have met her on several occasions and know of her struggles. She never fails to amaze me in her fight to overcome her past and in trying to live a normal lifestyle.

“Ann”
Hamilton, Ont.

JUST A MOMENT/HERMAN PRAAMSMA



"There are two things to aim at in life: first, to get what you want; and, after that, to enjoy it. Only the wisest of mankind achieve the second."
(Logan Pearsall Smith, 1865-1946, from: Afterthoughts)

Goal setting, we are taught, is very important. You have to have a dream, something for which you can reach, work, or perhaps save. All that requires some focus. You must be clear as to what it is that you want.

It is a sign of growing maturity when people begin to know their own goals in life. It is beautiful to see children become adults with a sense of self-discipline which is focused towards achieving a particular vocation, a meaningful relationship with a life's partner, the acquisition of a home, the assuming of a responsible place in church and society.

People constantly set goals, both big and small. Some goals are material ones, others are intangible. Some are attainable, others are clearly pipedreams. And people reveal quite a bit of themselves, of who they are, in the choices they make.

It is very unfortunate that reaching a goal, receiving that for which you wished, does not by itself guarantee happiness or contentment. So often people hold in their hands the fulfilment of their dreams and still feel something is missing in their lives. As Logan Pearsall Smith said, it is one thing to get what you want, and quite another to actually enjoy it. Smith observed that only the wisest of people achieve that combination.

Why is that? What is the missing ingredient?

The observation has been made that it is typical of a materialistic society that the more people have, the less they seem to be satisfied. You could also put it this way: the realization dawns that possessing *things* does not fulfill our deepest desires after all. And that is true, as far as it goes.

But the heart of the matter is that all goals and all achievement in the world benefit a person nothing unless that person is anchored in God. Unless your life hangs together, finds coherence and unity in the knowledge and service of God, nothing ultimately will bring you lasting satisfaction and fulfilment.

That is an old law; as old as creation itself. But in that wisdom lies the way to enjoyment and a richly satisfying life.

Herman Praamsma is pastor of Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, Rexdale, Ont.

Compassion for all

In your interview article with 'Susan', one of the last lines says: 'I've learned not to share the details of my story with many people because people are not capable of handling it.' Most likely I would belong to that category if you substitute the word "understanding" for "handling."

The story raises many questions. After reading the feature several times in order to understand it, I had a dream one morning before waking up. In my dream I saw the following:

I saw Calvary's hill with Jesus hanging on the cross. All around I saw many familiar faces. Some of them I recognized, others I did not. Some had name tags and a few I could read: editor and staff of C.C., Patricia Westerhof-Nyman, Susan; in short, people I had met during my lifetime — Christians, and non-Christians.

On the side of the hill I noticed somebody trying to climb up the hill in order to come close to the cross. It was

an old man. He was really struggling and could not make it. Some of the people turned their heads when the old man groaned. That was all they did. Not one of them stretched out a hand to bring the old man closer to the cross.

When looking up next to the cross, I noticed it was empty. I saw a wounded figure walking through the crowd towards the old man. He stretched out his hand and pulled him up on the hill. He put his wounded arms around the man and said: "Your sins are forgiven."

He climbed on the cross again, stretching out His arms once more, embracing all who stood on the hill — even including me. Once more he said: "Your sins are forgiven."

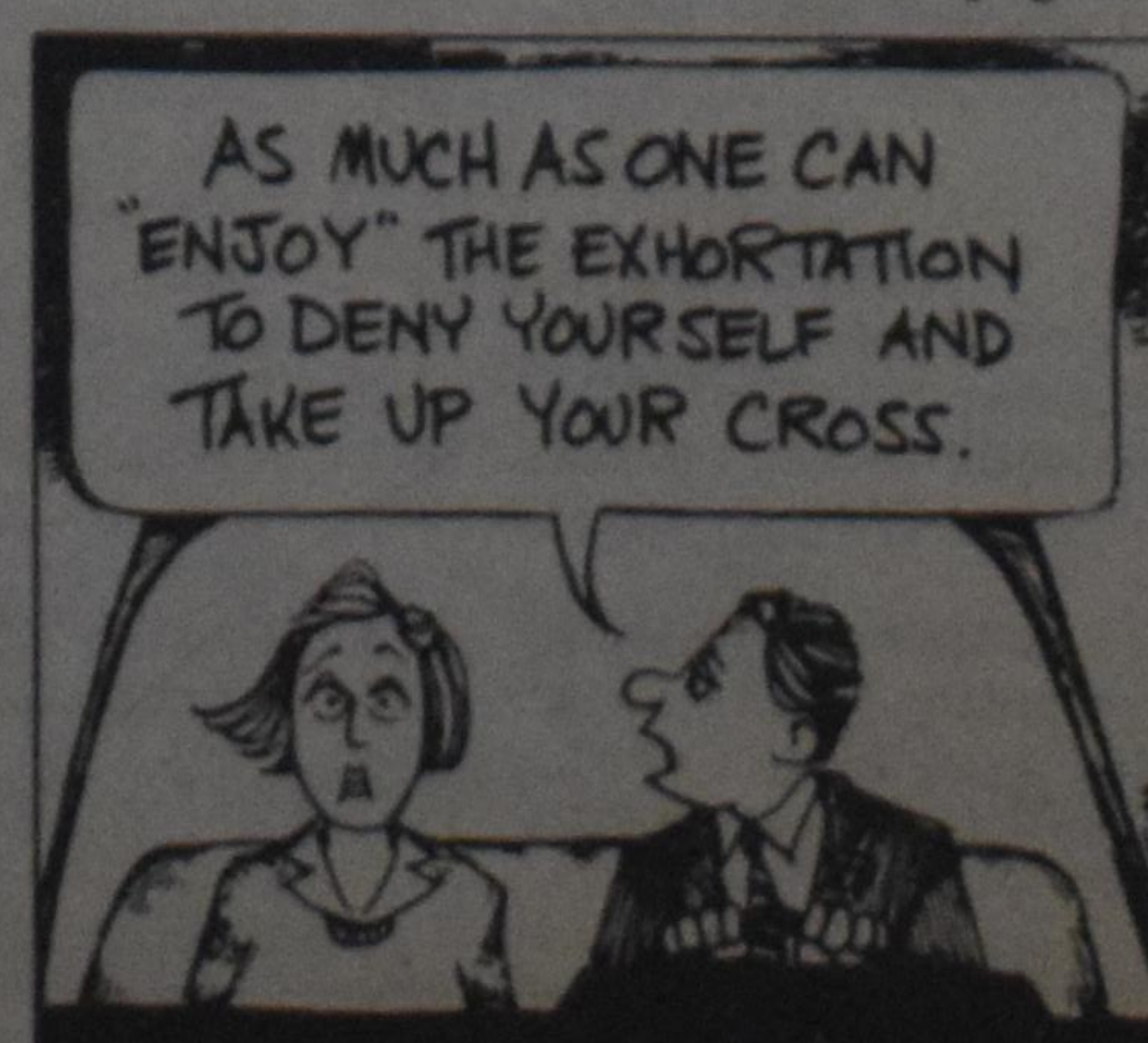
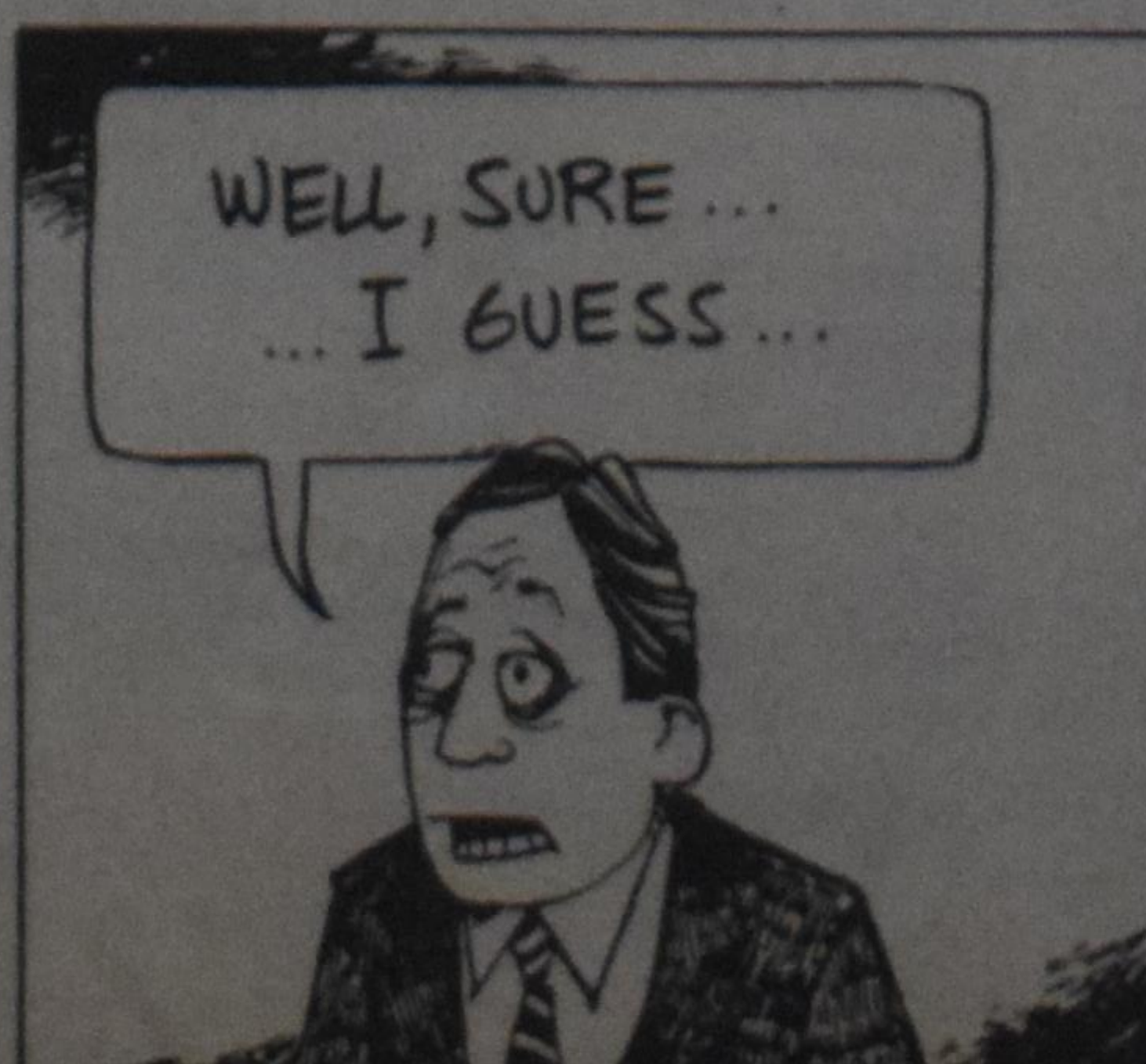
Gerald Schroor,
Oshawa, Ont.

Enthusiastic response

Another postal strike has just come to an end and this pleases us greatly. But what was especially pleasing to our circulation department was the surprisingly large number of readers who responded positively to our appeal to send renewal cheques as early as possible.

From all of us at C.C.: thank you very much!
Stan de Jong
Manager

BEYOND BELIEF



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Longer Letter

Change climate of abuse to climate of support

After reading the "Interview with 'Susan' — incest victim," I am so deeply touched that I am writing my first ever letter to an editor. Thank God that you were willing to publish the interview. It is a genuine act of courage. Thank God for Patricia Westerhof-Nyman who so sensitively and ably conducted the interview. It is a gift that calls us to action. Thank God for "Susan" who was willing to tell her story and who is a survivor. My heart goes out to you.

Only when the voices of the abused are no longer silenced is there hope that we can stop incest and other forms of abuse from happening. Like the priest and Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan, we have looked the other way for too long. Incest happens. It does. Truly. Too often. It is time for us as community to act as good Samaritans, binding up and healing wounds, protecting the abused rather than the abusers.

As a counsellor I have worked with a number of women who were abused as children. The pain, hurt, guilt, betrayal and self-hate is so deep it just goes on and on. Many victims live with the "family secret" eating away for years and years. And even if they find the courage to speak of the abuse, they are often accused of fantasizing or plain lying. Or they may be told that it must have been their own fault.

Not only do victims struggle with

incest trauma, as the interview makes clear, they have a deep faith trauma. In the book *Godsdienst en incest (Religion and Incest)*, Imbens and Jonker. Amersfoort: De Horstink, 1985) 10 Reformed and Roman Catholic women tell their stories. The women describe how they grew up with little sense of self-esteem and power because they were taught that everything happens according to God's will and that they needed to be obedient and submissive to men. This made it, they testify, extremely difficult to resist the advances of the male members of their families. God, they were led to believe, must have wanted this to happen. They, some of them concluded, must have been very wicked to deserve such terrible punishment.

We in the Reformed community need to seriously consider why and how tenets of our faith can be misused to the point that a climate is produced which can lead to incest and other forms of abuse. We need to create a climate of support at home, school and church in which women and men, boys and girls have a solid sense of their own value and worth, empowered as equal partners in God's ministry of healing and reconciliation. Otherwise ... ! God forbid.

Jim Olthuis,
Toronto, Ont.

How relevant is denominational identity?

I'd like to make some remarks and observations relevant to the article "Interview with 'Susan' — incest victim" (Sept. 9).

It is regrettable that some clues leaked out that could identify the denomination. Her father was a minister of a small Reformed denomination. Rather than use the word "small" it would have been better to state merely "a Reformed denomination."

In Ontario it would pretty well narrow down to the Netherlands Reformed or Free Reformed. Personally, I suspected Netherlands Reformed because of the clue: "My father was very much opposed to psychological help." Netherlands Reformed congregations tend to be against that, as well as vaccinations and inoculations. The fact that "Susan" was not allowed to go to Calvin College because she was permitted to hang around only with people of her own church gives all your readers peace of mind that it was definitely not a Christian Reformed parsonage in which these traumatic incidents took place.

I have two unanswered questions. Would this article have been printed if the father had been a Christian Reformed pastor? Was this pastor schizophrenic? He administered the Lord's Supper, baptized, did home visitations and taught catechism. By trying to get the devil out of her, could he not see that he could be making a prostitute out of her and draw her soul not only close to, but right into, hell? We may not judge, but one sure wonders if he was a child of God himself.

Peter Tensen,
Brantford, Ont.

Response:

Actually, there are at least five small Reformed denominations in Ontario, besides the somewhat larger Christian Reformed Church. Yes, this story would have been published regardless of what denomination the family belonged to. As a follow-up article by Mary Vander Vennen pointed out, incest is also a problem in Christian Reformed churches. We can't answer your last question.

Editor

More letters on page 8 ...

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Christian video a best seller

GIESSEN, West Germany (WEIS) — A film about the life of Christ that has been viewed by more than a quarter of a billion people has been made into a German video best-seller. 20,000 copies of the film "Jesus" have been sold as video cassettes in West Germany through department stores, Christian outlets and a video sales department of a large tabloid newspaper.

A ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ International, the film itself has been viewed by more than 260 million people in 110

nations. It has been translated into the major languages spoken by 96 % of the world's population. Based closely on the Gospel of Luke it was filmed at original Middle East locations indicated in the New Testament narrative.

Southern Baptists make database available on experimental design

PASADENA, Calif. (WEIS) — The World Evangelization Database, including a wide variety of information about the Christian mission — countries, cities, peoples, progress and challenges — has been made available on an experimental basis to other agencies, according to an announcement made by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In recent months, the FMB Research Department has transferred the information on to Video Text, a user-friendly system designed to make access to the data as simple as possible. Once a user has logged on the telephone link to the FMB computer, a series of screens ask questions about categories of information about which the inquirer may be interested. The menus of questions move from the general to the specific, until the inquirer locates what is needed.

Message to all C.C. subscribers!!

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Christmas album marketed

CHATSWORTH, Calif. (EP) — Sparrow Records will release a multi-artist pop/rock Christmas album for the Christian market in October. Christmas will contain 11 hand-picked traditional carols with contemporary arrangements, and will feature Deniece Williams, White Heart, BeBe and CeCe Winans, Steve Taylor, Steve Camp, Michael Card, Margaret Becker, Geoff Moore & The Distance, Steven Curtis Chapman, and Tim Miner.

"When we decided to put together an album of Christmas carols, our goal was to capture the quality of tradition within a contemporary interpretation," explained Billy Ray Hearn, president of Sparrow Records.

"Through this album we hope people will not only cherish the traditions behind the songs, but seriously consider the timeless message of hope and salvation within them."

Tiny feet become pro-life symbol

TAYLOR, Ariz. (EP) — More than four million "Precious Feet" have been distributed by Heritage House in Taylor, Arizona. The tiny lapel pins show two human feet, smaller than the average adult fingernail, that are the size and shape of the feet of a 10-week-old unborn baby. The pin is based on a photo taken by Dr. Russell Sacco, a Portland, Ore. physician who wanted to depict what is actually destroyed during an abortion.

"It has been difficult for me to comprehend the enormous impact my picture has had on the pro-life movement," said Sacco, whose photo made tiny feet an international pro-life symbol.

Lutherans team up with famous animators

CHATSWORTH, Calif. (EP) — Hanna-Barbera Productions Inc. has teamed up with Sparrow Home Video to release "The Little Troll Prince: A Christmas Parable" to Christian bookstore and video outlets. This 45-minute fully-animated program features the animation of Hanna-Barbera and voice performances from Vincent Price, Jonathan Winters, Cloris Leachman, Don Knotts, and Danny Cooksey as the voice of Bu. Produced in co-operation with the International Lutheran Layman's League, the story tells of the once frozen heart of a little Troll Prince, Bu, melting into joy upon receiving the Christmas gift of God's love.

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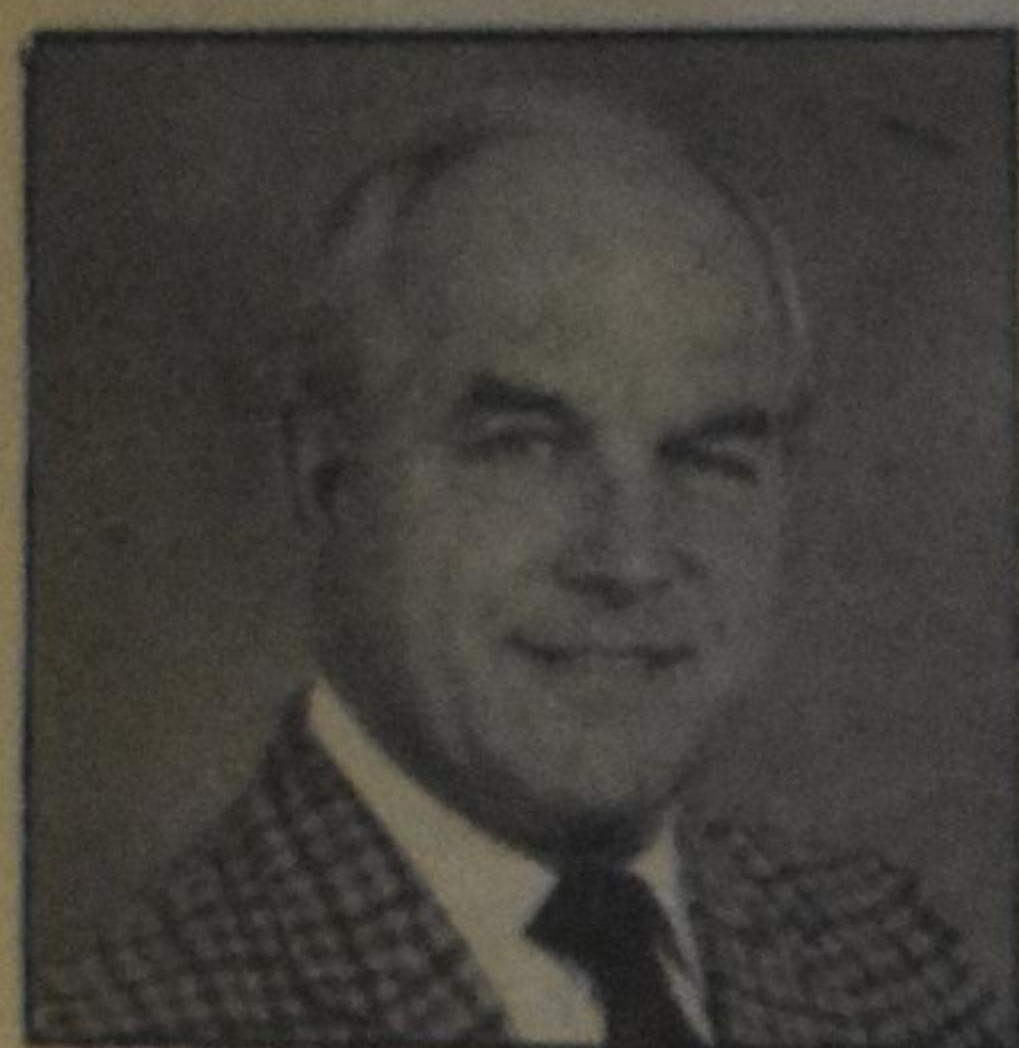
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Canadian Church Scene

Jacob Kuntz

Timely questions

In his column "Between World and Faith" Walter Klaassen asked a number of questions concerning the world (especially the Western world) in which we live today, (*Mennonite Reporter* Aug. 29, 1988). We shall not reprint every question, but make a selection so as to give our readers an impression of the agonies of the commentator, agonies which you may or may not share.

Why do we think that we have the best and most complete understanding of the gospel ever held by Christians?

Why are we so confident that the present structure of the church is as God intended it, especially since it bears practically no resemblance to Jesus' images of the disciple community?

Why is there such fervent concern for individual rights in the affluent churches of North America, and little passionate concern for the economic rights of the poor in our midst?

Why is it that many Christians who oppose abortion vehemently because they say it is murder, do not just as vehemently oppose the continuing murder of people in Mozambique or South Africa or Israel?

We would be horrified if someone suggested that we sprinkle cyanide on our children's lunch. Why are we not horrified when equally poisonous chemicals are sprinkled on the cereals, fruits, vegetables, and meats that we feed our children?

How is it that the recent explosion of the drilling platform in the North Sea is regarded as a sad, fateful tragedy when it is the obvious result of error and neglect in human technology?

By what logic are cruel socialist dictatorships called "the evil empire" and equally cruel fascist dictatorships called "freedom fighters"?

Why would a political party, when it had no chance of forming a government, advocate Canada's withdrawal from NATO and NORAD, but when its fortunes in the polls improve, quickly adjust its policies to greater realism?

What is the point of a person winning the whole world when the price is life itself? And what would be the price to get that life back?

On clergy and their spouses

Church members often pay

more than normal attention to the lifestyle of their ministers. Preachers (and their spouses) are said to live in glass houses. What they do (and don't do) can be a juicy topic for a talk among believers.

In the *United Church Observer* of August 1988 we found the following question plus answer:

Q: Our minister has two small children and his wife works. The children are in day care. It is no wonder that many young people turn to alcohol, drugs and have little respect for authority, when their parents dump them like this. I know some women must work for financial reasons, but most work because of peer pressure or greed. Shouldn't the United Church, through its ministers, be showing society that a mother belongs with her children?

A.: Well, some mothers do have to work for financial reasons. Some are ministers' wives. Some are ministers. Some mothers work to develop the special gifts God gave them; others work for fellowship or financial freedom (greed?); some work to bring health or happiness, or friendship to others. Some work because their husbands have abandoned them. Some never had husbands. Some work in offices, hospitals, churches, senior residences, jails; many work full time at home. Some mothers belong at home with their children. So do some fathers. In some clergy couples it would be far better if he stayed home and she preached. It would be nice if the world were as simple as you make it out to be. But there were unhappy children a long time before there were working mothers; my wife is working again, she's happy, our children are happy, I'm learning to cook, and I don't think that keeping mom

On modern problems and Mary

barefoot and pregnant will solve the problems.

On the same subject: At the Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops, 400 bishops' wives were present, from all over the world. They could attend workshops (while their husbands talked about women in ecclesiastical office, etc.). This is what the *Canadian Churchman* (that name will soon be changed) tells us:

What was the most popular workshop at the Lambeth bishops' wives conference? Church embroidery? Banner making? Liturgical dance? Family planning?

Definitely not.

The one most in demand was called "Stress and the Clergy Wife."

After 60 wives registered for the session, a second one was arranged to accommodate the overflow.

It was one of 35 that were offered which included flower arranging, pottery, music in worship, living with the dying.

The popular choice of the stress workshop was not a frivolous one.

At least 150 of the 400 wives at Lambeth said they held jobs as teachers, nurses or medical auxiliaries, social workers, doctors, musicians; architects or administrators to supplement their husband's inadequate income.

One African said her family moved to a new diocese after her husband was elected bishop only to find there was no bishop's house, little money to

pay him and that she was expected to be a mother to the diocese in addition to her family.

It became evident that stress within family life was a universal problem and one with which the church has not adequately dealt.

Lambeth provided bishops' wives with a forum to share these concerns, but no real hope that their situation would improve.

Mary as Model

The Roman Catholic Church has observed a "Marian Year" that ended on Aug. 15. But devotion to Mary continues, under the leadership of Pope John Paul II. The *Catholic Register* of Aug. 20 gave a good example of the place Mary has in the hearts and lives of many Roman Catholic believers:

During the Marian Year there have been many inspiring programs worldwide to bring people closer to Mary, to rekindle devotion to her, especially through her many feastdays. Many have participated in special gatherings or prayerful study days focusing on Our Lady. Thousands have gone on pilgrimages to pray at Marian shrines in various countries. Truly, it has been a time of many blessings.

In studying the Faith, Catholics everywhere have discovered that Mary holds a unique place in salvation history and that she is "the most excellent mode of faith

and love" (Vatican II). Many Popes have said that Mary is the fullest expression of perfect faithfulness to the Holy Spirit and his action in souls.

The Holy Father, who long ago dedicated himself to Mary (note the large "M" for Mary on his papal coat of arms), asks Christians to turn to her who "shines on the horizon of the advent of our times." To be true Christians, we must realize the vital link between Mary and Christ, between Mary and the Church.

John Paul II has done much to restore devotion to Mary, to bring back the warm love for Our Lady that was evident in the Church decades ago, a devotion which unfortunately was partly eroded by a neo-modernism in the Church and a growing secularism in the world.

As we march toward the third Christian millennium, there is still much work to be done. In an age of increasing promiscuity, divorce, abortion and permissiveness, we need Mary as our model.

For 20th-century Catholics, the Marian Year was but the beginning of a new era that will lead us closer to the Divine-human Person who has the answers to problems today. The third millennium belongs to Christ, and Mary can show us the way.

Jacob Kuntz is pastor of the First Christian Reformed Church in Kitchener, Ont.

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Letters

The darkness of incest

Your feature of Sept. 9, "Interview with Susan — an incest victim," was not seen as "trying to be sensational" and was accepted by this reader in the positive spirit meant "for the healing of individuals in their midst and to the honour of the God of our churches who made all things bright and beautiful."

At times you may have to risk appearing sensational so as not

to be seen as dealing entirely with the mundane and predictable. The darkness of incest needs to be exposed to the light of Christian awareness, understanding and acceptance. Thus armed we may respond more appropriately to the victims who suffer this kind of humiliation and abuse and to their abusers.

As a counsellor who is

intimate with these atrocities, I would like to thank you for your responsible editing. The interview, in my opinion, was explicit without being distasteful. It spares the reader the worst details without minimizing the effects of incest.

Some of your readers may be confused about multiple personalities and may question the reality of their existence.

However, the accounts related in your feature have been confirmed in the psychiatric field and in my own personal contact with victims of incest. At first this disturbed my own sense of reality. But I soon came to appreciate this phenomenon as a God-given defence mechanism that a helpless victim involuntarily uses to survive the nightmare of incestual betrayal.

Also your decision to publish an article by Mary Vander Vennen entitled "Sexual abuse in Christian families" is appreciated. Sensation? No! Responsible? Yes!

Sam Da Silva,
St. Catharines, Ont.

Break the conspiracy

Thank you for printing the story of "Susan." We personally know of daughters who became pregnant by their fathers and of granddaughters who were repeatedly sexually abused by their grandfathers; of young girls repeatedly raped by their mothers' friends with their mothers' knowledge; of young boys, with their parents' knowledge, abused by older men; of daughters-in-law

sexually assaulted by their fathers-in-law.

The fact that we put this in the plural is deliberate, for in each instance we personally know several victims. Some of these cases are outside of the Reformed "community," most are within. Of the latter, some of the assailants were office bearers in a Reformed church. In all of these cases the victims still suffer — and so do

those whom they love and trust. If Susan marries, her husband will have to be able to live with more than Susan's scars: he will have to be willing to share Susan's wounds and so will acquire some scars of his own. The misery spreads.

Your article is a "first" in C.C. What does that tell us? In view of the wide-spread occurrence of such abuse, it indicates a *conspiracy of*

silence in the Reformed "community." These assailants are criminals and/or sick people. To forgive them is, indeed, required. But it is not enough. For they do strike again, and again, most often violating more than one vulnerable human being — as Susan's story illustrates.

For the protection of our vulnerable ones, for allowing them to grow up in the joy of

our Lord, these assailants must be exposed, if not to be punished by justice then certainly to be treated by medicine.

We are grateful for your courage which allowed you to start breaking through the conspiracy of silence. And may Susan find the husband she needs.

Jeanette and Peter Schouls,
Edmonton, Alta.

A word of encouragement to victims and perpetrators

I have just finished reading Mary Vander Vennen's article in C.C. Sept. 16. You have said it very well, Mary. I sense your anger throughout the article. Thanks for caring enough to be angry. Your anger is very justified. I can identify with much of what you say, even though I have not been as severely abused as many victims are.

From my own experience I'm afraid that many people will be unable to understand your anger. They will have a difficult time coping with this stuff or realizing the need for this type of article. Possibly they will tell you that you are letting your feelings take over. For that reason I am writing this letter.

Even though I have not suffered the abuse to the same extent as many others have, I do carry the scars of my own experience and had a difficult struggle. I also know of at least

10 girls who are still working their way through this painful stuff in their lives.

My brother was fortunately not violent but very seductive. He acted as though he cared about me and made me feel important. I was fortunate (if we can call it that) in being able to keep him from going all the way. My fear of becoming pregnant was already with me at the early stage of 10-14. He impressed me through many lies, convincing me to do various other things for him instead. He would say, "This is what popular girls do. We do this all the time. There is no harm in this."

How does a 10-14 year old child resist the brother five years her senior? He was a popular guy in my eyes. Through his behaviour my sexual feelings were stimulated at a much too early age. A child of that age should not have to

deal with such feelings. It led me on a path of promiscuity before age 15.

His threat that if our parents would find out they would kill me did not register as it would now but instilled an awesome fear and guilt. When I was 14, he became quite forceful and nearly succeeded in raping me. The full impact of what he was doing to me hit me, and I managed to get him out of my bedroom. It left me full of guilt and anger. I loathed myself. This was the end of my abuse.

★ ★ ★ ★

Now after, off and on, five years of counselling, I have learned and at times am still learning to deal with my childhood guilt, fear, self-doubt and anger. A loving and caring counsellor like yourself, Mary, has guided me through a very difficult struggle. I thank God daily for placing her in my life. Through her encouragement I was at last able to do the most difficult task of confronting my brother. This is what brings me to the main point of my letter.

It was not until the confrontation that he realized what he had done to me. I am thankful that he did not deny my accusations although he was tempted to do so. He

realized he had done enough damage to me and he knew he had to acknowledge his guilt for the sake of my healing. He now takes full responsibility for his actions because he remembers all he did. He did this by painfully searching his mind and recalling all the ugly incidents. He now understands the full extent of what he has done to me. He has tried to be helpful. I am grateful to him. I don't hate him anymore.

I asked him why he did it and why me. He had questioned himself on that also. "Why did I do it and why her? The only answer he can find is that I was the youngest, lonely, not part of the older group and I was easily impressed by his lies, as he admitted, "It was an ego trip for me."

★ ★ ★ ★

I am writing this letter for several reasons. One is to thank you for your article, next to encourage other victims to keep working on healing. Yes, it is a difficult struggle, often painful and lonely. But it will get better. Look for help. Find yourself a caring, Christ-loving, counsellor if possible. Getting rid of the guilt feeling, the despair and the depressions is so freeing and at times even exhilarating. No matter what

your height, you can walk tall.

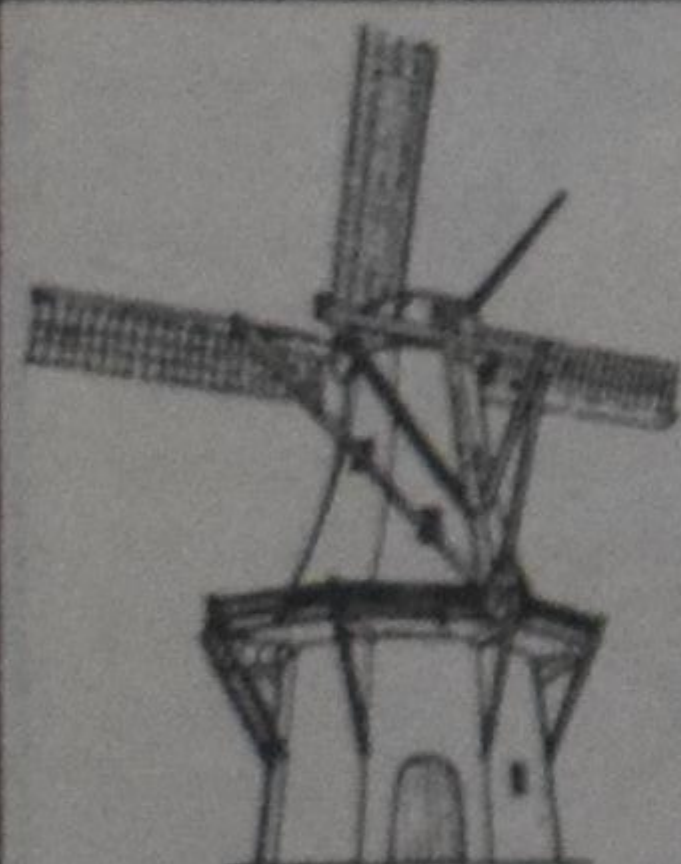
Lastly, and very importantly, I want to encourage those who are guilty of causing these little ones so much suffering by their silence or refusal to co-operate — the perpetrators — to come forward. Go to those you abused, no matter to what extent, and help them. Is this not the Lord's way? Should you not come to them? *You* need to come and offer help, ask forgiveness and help them in their painful struggle. It will surprise you how much healing for yourself there is in this.

I have been through group therapy and found it very helpful in order to understand my own feelings. I have witnessed how all these girls struggle for inner healing, feelings of acceptance, and Shalom. Most of these women were from strict Christian homes.

I too am angry, Mary, at all that which goes on also in our CRC community. But I believe that this anger, if well directed, can be used in a positive way. Because of my own experience I hope to be able to help other women or girls in group settings or on a one-to-one basis, as I am doing now. In this positive way I trust the Lord will allow me to give understanding and care to these girls. I hope He will use my anger against this cancer in our society in this constructive way.

I pray that these articles in C.C. and the continued work of caring counsellors will give much healing and renewal.

An incest survivor



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For the time being...

Adrian Peetoom



I love organ music, but ...

I love organ music: Bach, of course; Buxtehude, Feike Asma playing Cesar Franck in St. Paul's Anglican in Toronto, one of the Zwarts improvising magic with simple Genevan tunes in New Westminster CRC. When I feel down low I put on an organ record/tape/disk, cover myself with a headset, and let the toccatas and fugues blow their uplifting magic straight into my ears. Over the years, many a rousing organ rendition of the final hymn has helped me overcome a sermon that was not inspiring.

But our congregation has made a decision to replace its faltering electronic wobbly with a pipe organ at the cost of about a third of our annual budget, and I am strongly opposed to it.

I'm not against it because it costs quite a bundle. Worship life is important life and it needs its own proper apparatus.

I'm not against it because I'd rather not sing with an organ. I once produced a record of congregational, organ-accompanied singing just because I loved it so much. And no occasional, overzealous *prima donna* organist who had the temerity to drown out *my* singing has ever turned me off for long.

I'm not against it because I think the money could have been better spent on the poor, the homeless, the dispossessed, the outcasts. I have a notion that most of the congregation may be doing its share for them as well.

Worshipping from a script

I'm against it because I think that in our days pipe organs stand in the way of people taking responsibility for their own worship lives. Pipe organs and pulpits promote passivity. They allow pew sitters to leave the job of worship to others who say and play and pray.

Even when, in some congregations, a sprinkling of "ordinary" members get to participate with readings or prayers, guitar or flute, there is no mistaking the expectation: nerves or no, it must be done right and fit the ethos of long history and tradition, or else the people will pooh-pooh it. Church service is often repertoire theatre: minister and organist play out a selection of appropriate scripts while the audience watches.

I propose we begin thinking seriously about the possibility that better scripts *reside in the lives of the audience* who should be invited onto the stage. I am not saying we should not have paid professionals in our churches; in fact, I would encourage churches to add one: a musician. But we should contract professionals to be busy only in the equipping of the saints. Preachers should ask more and more pew sitters to take responsibility for whole liturgies, lead and teach them away from the scripts that are approved for them, and onto the scripts that well up out of their own hearts. Liturgy should not be a perfect and safe performance. Liturgy ought to reflect the bumbling and stumbling of our own daily lives.

Take risks

In my view, most mid-sized congregations have five or six capable preachers and 20-40 people who could regularly speak and pray publicly what is in their hearts and lives. There are story tellers, singers and instrumentalists, dancers, actors, puppeteers, dramatic readers, music lovers with ample supplies of edifying music tapes that could lend colour to selected moments in a congregation's liturgical life.

It's tragic that most people who read this will not think so. Most kids in school don't think they measure up as students either. Churches and schools specialize in making "clients" believe they are incompetent. But learning is what learners do, and worship is what worshippers do. Just as most people have learned in spite of schools, so many pew sitters have learned to worship in spite of their routine church experiences. I simply think it's time that we begin building the equipping of the saints right into the structure of our church life, starting with creating the conditions that will invite people to take risks.

I suggest that congregations start looking for paid musicians who are appointed to equip the saints musically. Their task would be to find and encourage local talent to take responsibility for the musical framework of the weekly liturgy. They should play a variety of instruments, lead a band of whatever instruments members now play or are willing to learn to play, find and introduce new music, compose special music for



Illustration from the cover of *Credo*, a youth magazine of the '70s.

special occasions and encourage others to do so. I think that would be a better use of music money than buying yet one more pipe organ which is likely to further drown out the music that lives in people's souls already.

I have a theory about the serious decline in church membership in the Netherlands. Over the last 40 years its liturgy remained stale and pulpit/organ controlled, while the levels of education and sophistication of its pewsitters increased by leaps

and bounds. Dutch society everywhere else opened its door wide to talent, initiative and creativity.

For a while people were content to park their intelligence and creativity outside the church door. But then they began to skip, the evening service first perhaps. And gradually they began to realize that the church had no interest at all in who they were, in what they thought and felt, and in what talents and courage they had. All they were asked to be was an audience for scripts

they no longer understood or were interested in, while everywhere else life offered them starring roles.

I think that the buying of pipe organs in our day and age is an invitation for yet more people to slump in the pew. I feel sad and defeated about that, especially when I think of young people still so full of promise, energy, rhythm and new tunes.

Adrian Peetoom is senior editor of *Scholastic* — TAB Publications, Ltd. in Richmond Hill, Ont.

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Feature

The Megabyte minister

Like blush on a girl's face, the morning stroked a bit of red on the horizon. The crickets, tired from serenading far-away lovers, called it a night and fell silent. A breeze, slight as a baby's breathing, began to conduct a soft symphony in the treetops and birds became audibly excited with the prospect of another day.

The Reverend Alex E. Tronic was too much involved in what he had just accomplished to notice what went on around him. In the darkness of his book-lined study, the light of his computer screen spread an eerie, yellowish light around his desk. There was no sound in the house, but in the Reverend's mind, a long-anticipated celebration had already begun. This, so Alex E. Tronic said to himself, was a moment that should be marked with the solemn sound of a trumpet fanfare, with a thunderous gun salute, or more appropriate to the occasion, with a 600-voice choir singing Handel's "Hallelujah" chorus. Instead, there was only silence all around him.

Reverend Tronic remembered that at historically significant moments people had always spoken words which became linguistic monuments in global memories. "One small step for a man, but a giant leap for mankind"; "I shall return"; and Luther's "Here I stand ..." came to his mind. In vain he cast about for a similarly memorable expression, but all he could come up with was: "I done it!"

A labour of 32 years had come to conclusion. For three decades Tronic had sacrificed vacations, neglected his family, and suffered the scorn of five congregations who monotonously accused him of "never making visits." Tronic remembered the bitter complaints of his wife, unpleasant *censura morum* sessions, and the constant criticism of his children. All these painful memories dissolved now, instantly and totally, in the triumph of this moment.

Almost all the waking hours of those 32 years Tronic had spent at the keyboard of his computer. The whole of the Bible in three translations, Greek, Hebrew and English dictionaries, hermeneutic principles and *Roget's Thesaurus*, volumes of poetry, and numerous other components had been fed into his machine, and the end product was a program which he called "Harmiletic." A clever combination, so Tronic complimented himself, of the words harmonious and homiletic. The world's first sermon-making computer program!

At this fateful early morning hour he had just completed its first trial run. He had not wanted to make it easy on Harmiletic, so he had chosen a text that was homiletically somewhat elusive. He found it in the *King James Version*: II Corinthians 10:12: "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that command themselves, but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

He had typed the applicable command on his keyboard: "Sermon, II Corinthians 10:12." Harmiletic asked: "Audience?" Again Tronic punched in the answer: "Average intelligence,

suburban constellation."

Harmiletic continued: "Emotional intensity desired?" It was then that the Reverend decided to throw all caution into the wind. For 32 years he had heard via innumerable grapevines that his pulpitering was as exciting as sewing buttons on second-hand Salvation Army blouses. That criticism had really hurt, but Tronic had always known that this lack of appreciation for his homiletic skills was due to the fact that the congregation's attention span was no longer than that of a developmentally handicapped fruitfly.

Now the moment had come to begin the new career of the Reverend Alex E. Tronic. The program was designed to produce sermons with emotional intensity varying from one to 10. It was the last number that Tronic instructed Harmiletic to build into the homily. Harmiletic, however, was not yet satisfied with the guidelines received. A whole series of questions appeared on the screen: "Length?" "Poetic Quotations?" "Alliterations?" and many more. Tronic punched in the desired level of all these categories and in a last triumphant gesture of confidence, he instructed Harmiletic to doublestrike.

The final command had produced a bit of whirring, and then the printer began to buzz. Two thousand words! Words of exquisite eloquence! Words of unblemished beauty! Words of power! A whole, incomparable sermon!

The next Sunday morning the First Christian Reformed Church of Terpvile experienced a shock. When the reader had droned the Bible passage and the text, about four-fifths of the congregation settled into the comatose chagrin with which they customarily anesthetized themselves in defence against the Reverend's

sermons. The rest of the membership, not yet having reached the age of understanding, left for Sunday school.

Then the Reverend began to speak, and soon after, uncanny things began to happen. People in the pews began to straighten from their sleepy semi-slouch, shoulders squared, and the coughing which always accompanied the Reverend's sermons like the crackling static in the broadcast of a radio station too far away, discontinued.

Instead, a hitherto unknown silence descended, as soon every member of the congregation listened, spellbound, to the preacher. The Reverend Tronic experienced the attention of his flock like a mountaineer who has reached the peak and sees an unexpected and unimagined landscape unfold before his eyes. Tronic marvelled at the sound of his voice, echoing through the silence of the congregation's attention as it climbed the walls of the sanctuary and bounced back with rich resonance through the church. Moved by an irresistible urge, his hands commenced to make expressive gestures. Encouraged by the noticeable rapture of his audience, melodious intonations formed spontaneously in his speaking.

The "Amen" which concluded the sermon was greeted with general regret. During the offertory the organist was moved to such unusual ecstasy that the congregation without any hesitation or announcement joined in singing the hymn that

was being played. The deacons collected so much money and checks that half-way down the aisles they had to go back to the front to find empty plates, for no more money could be deposited on the ones that had passed through the pews.

After that service the life of the Reverend Alex E. Tronic changed drastically. His council gave him a substantial raise in salary, his wife grew much more demonstrative in her affections, his children visited more frequently, and the classis to which Terpvile belonged delegated him to the denomination's synod.

His reputation spread quickly throughout the country and he received invitations to speak at commencement ceremonies, conventions, the opening of shopping centres and other solemn and festive occasions. A publisher approached him with the request for copyrights to his sermons, of which a dozen appeared in print with the title: "Tranquil with Tronic." The book became an instant bestseller, and created a handsome income for the Reverend Tronic.

For five years Tronic enjoyed his new life. At the age of 65 he decided to retire from active service and he bequeathed Harmiletic to the First Christian Reformed Church of Terpvile.

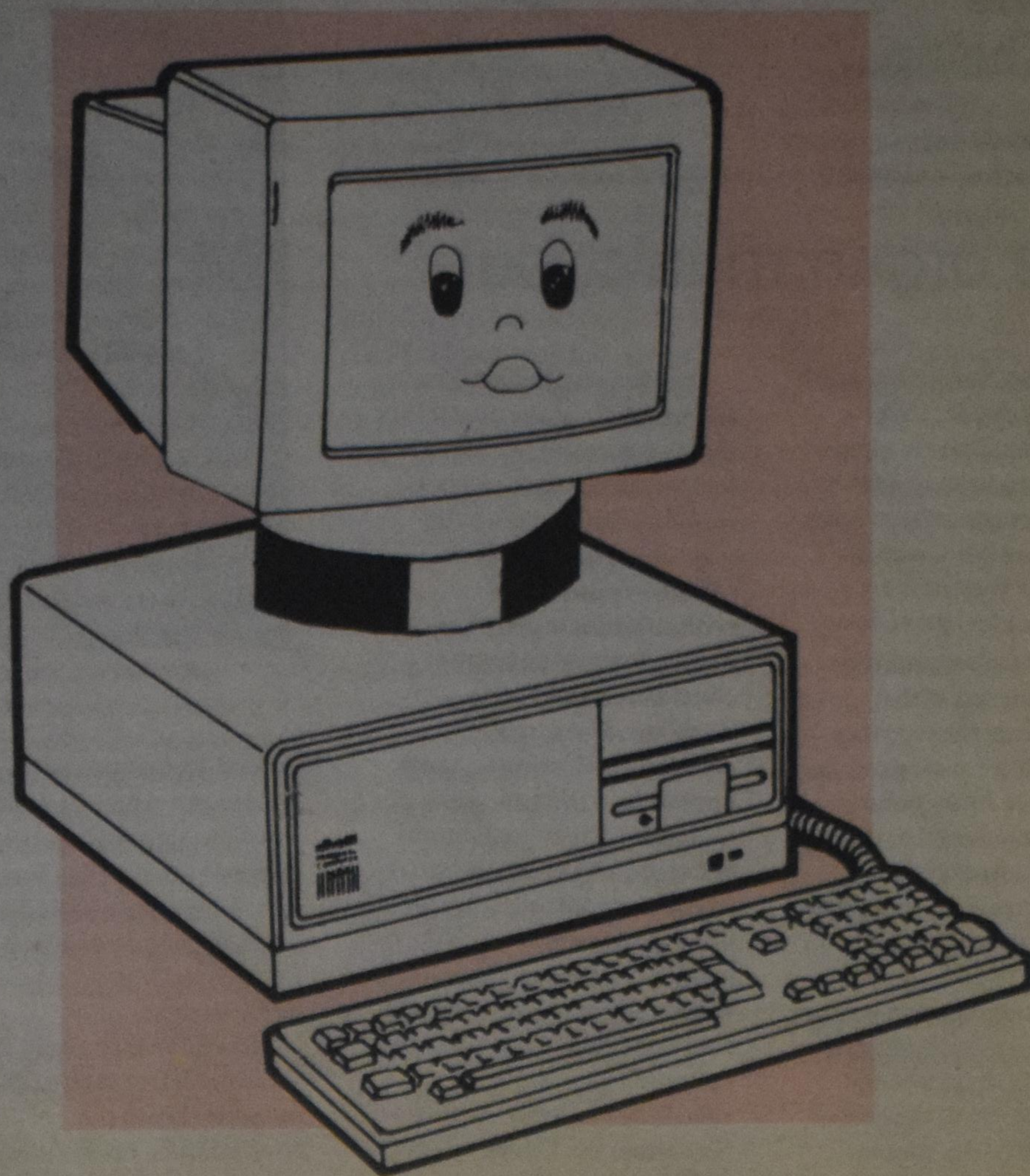
The council announced the gift at a congregational meeting, as well as its decision that Harmiletic had made the calling of another minister unnecessary. Elder Tedelmeyer had been trained by Reverend Tronic to handle Harmiletic. Tedelmeyer would lead the

services. That gift caused considerable consternation in the congregation.

The problem arose when one of the members asked for the floor and made a long speech which in short came down to his firm opinion: "If it makes sermons it should be ordained!" The council promised to take this remark into consideration, which indeed it did at its next session.

That session turned out to be a lengthy one. Not only did council study the subject of ordination, but one of the deacons also raised the matter of gender. "How," asked the deacon, "can we even speculate about ordination if we are totally in the dark about the gender of Harmiletic?" And he continued: "However beautiful and edifying these sermons are, it must be determined to which sex their composer belongs. These sermons might compete in efficacy with Peter's Pentecost sermon, but if they come from the wrong gender, I want nothing to do with them."

Motions began to be made by almost all members of the council. As quickly as they were made, they were defeated. One of the members who had paged through the Church Order only spoke of prescribed theological training, which in this brother's opinion, Harmiletic had received from the Reverend Tronic. He therefore proposed that Harmiletic be allowed to continue making sermons on the basis of being singularly gifted. "After all," the man remarked, "such things must be done decently and in good order!" Closer examination of



Article 7 of the Church Order, however, seemed to make this solution impossible.

The council then decided to take the matter to their classis, seeing that no consensus became obtainable in its midst. The clerk was instructed to include the following question in the credentials:

The Council of the First Christian Reformed Church of Terpvil requests Classis' help in determining the ecclesiastical standing of Harmiletic which is a sermon-making computer program of unknown gender.

Classis, predictably, appointed a study committee which was mandated to examine the matter with reference to the confessions, in the framework of all the biblical data, and with consideration of the time-boundness of the problem. The committee was composed of

the more theologically and dogmatically informed members of the assembly, as well as an elder who specialized in waste management.

After an interval of three years the committee reported as follows:

of homiletics, but we have been unable to come to a unanimous conclusion about its gender, and, therefore, we have reached no conclusive opinion about Harmiletic's potential for edifying our congregations.

Your committee has taken note of the fact that Harmiletic is singularly gifted in the field

The committee recommended that the matter be referred to synod. That proposal met with approval of all members, and the stated clerk of classis wrote his denominational colleague as follows:

Classis Lacrimosa of the Christian Reformed Church in North America overtures

synod to determine the possibility of ordination of Harmiletic which has exhorted in the past (with blessed results) in the churches of our classis, but without license, and without gender determination.

Synod decided to witness a demonstration of Harmiletic's skills. So the machine was placed on the podium and instructed to produce a sermon on Psalm 50:9a: "I will accept no bull from your house ..." (R.S.V.) Elder Tedelmeyer who was there to manipulate the keyboard gave all the appropriate instructions, including an emotional intensity command of 10. Harmiletic whirled into life, and printed a sermon, which then was read by Tedelmeyer.

The reaction was as profound as it had always been. The chairman instructed the representative of the standing committee on Sermons for Reading Services to distribute

boxes of Kleenex, for many of the delegates were in tears.

Members of the "concerned" wing of the denomination ran, in an emotional outburst, to the tables where the professors of the college and seminary were seated and embraced them all.

Members of synod's committee on race relations began to dance in the aisles, and the spokesperson for the finance committee announced that quotas would no longer be necessary if only Harmiletic could preach once a year in every congregation.

A hush fell over the assembly when finally the committee of pre-advice was given the floor. The committee spoke with great admiration of Harmiletic's abilities, of the many blessed results which the sermons had in many congregations, of the cost-effective way it operated, of its endorsement by the Christian Reformed Pension Fund, and

of its doctrinal and confessional faithfulness.

But alas, the reporter for the committee continued, "the problem of its gender remains unsolved."

"Your committee, therefore, recommends that Harmiletic be donated to a far-away foreign mission field with the mandate to convert the heathens."

The advice of the committee was unanimously adopted and Harmiletic was packed in plastic, lovingly crated in cedar, and put on a plane, never to be seen or heard of again.

The Christian Reformed Church of Terpvil is now sending out congregational profiles to ministers of known gender only.

Carl Teyl is pastor of the First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ont.

THE INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES AND THE EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP OF CANADA

announce

A CONFERENCE

Christianity & Canadian Culture

October 20-22, 1988, Toronto, Ontario

The purpose: to examine how churches and theological traditions have related with, and influenced Canadian society.

The goal: to shape the directions of this influence in order to redirect society and meet its needs as we head for the twenty-first century.

The method: Through informed guest speakers and workshop sessions we will catalogue and examine the communal efforts of main-line churches. Speakers will inform us about their own church community's attitudes and commitment from a historical and theological perspective.

Workshop sessions will examine the major lines of activity aimed at Canadian society in the twentieth century, who have been the leaders, what have been the effects of this activity, and how this has been perceived in our culture in general and in the churches in particular.

The result: It is hoped that the results of the conference - published in book form - will prove helpful to churches in planning for the future and will lead to more effective ecumenical activities.

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Paul Marshall, Senior Member, Political Theory, Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, Ontario;
Cyril Powles (Anglican), Professor, Trinity College, Toronto, Ontario;
David Phimmer, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary;
David Lockhead (United Church of Canada), Professor, Vancouver School of Theology, Vancouver, B.C.;
Brian Stiller, Executive Director, Evangelical Fellowship of Canada;
Fr Brian Hogan (Roman Catholic), St. Michael's College, Toronto, Ontario;
Lee Cormie (Roman Catholic), Professor, St. Michael's College, Toronto, Ontario;

George Rawlyk (Baptist), Centre for Canadian Studies, Sackville N.B.;
Daniel Sahas (Eastern Orthodox), Department of Religious Studies, University of Waterloo, Kitchener, Ontario;
Harry Groenewold (Reformed), Professor, The Kings College, Edmonton, Alberta;
Bill Janzen, Ottawa Representative, Mennonite Central Committee, Ottawa, Ontario;
Ian Rennie, Dean, Ontario Theological Seminary, Toronto, Ontario;
Rev. Wayne Dawes, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, Chatham, Ontario

Registration fee: \$85.00

Fee both conferences: \$120.00

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THE INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES AND THE COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

IN CANADA, ANNOUNCE

A CONFERENCE

The CRC & Canadian Culture

October 24&25, 1988, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario

The purpose: to examine how the Christian Reformed community has related with, and influenced Canadian society. This conference follows immediately a similar conference, *Christianity & Culture*, which will examine similar issues from interdenominational perspective. The earlier conference will be held in Toronto from October 20-22, 1988.

The goal: to analyze and understand the diversity of Reformed cultural activity and perspectives as we approach the twenty-first century.

The method: Through informed speakers and panel sessions we will catalogue the historical and social experience of the CRC in Canada and examine the diverse perspectives within this Reformed community.

The result: It is hoped that the sharing of insights and perspectives will help us to be a more loving and obedient people and a more effective Christian voice in Canada

The participants:

Clifford C. Pitt, President, Institute for Christian Studies;
Robert VanderVennen, Associate Editor, Calvinist Contact;
Aileen VanGinkel, Research Associate, Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada;
Harry J. Kits, Executive Director, Citizens for Public Justice;
Harry Groenewold, Professor of History, The Kings College, Edmonton, Alberta;
Hugh Cook, Assistant Professor of English, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario;
Gerald VandeZande, Public Affairs Director, Citizens for Public Justice, Nick Loenen, MLA, British Columbia Legislature, Vancouver, B.C.;
Katherine Vander Grift, Public Affairs, Citizens for Public Justice,

Alberta Affiliate, Edmonton, Alberta;
Arie Van Eek, Executive Secretary, Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, Burlington, Ontario;
Elbert Van Donkersgoed, Research and Policy Director, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Guelph, Ontario;
Adrian Peetoom, Senior Editor, Scholastic Publishers, Richmond Hill, Ontario;
George Vandervelde, Senior Member, Theology, Institute for Christian Studies
David Koyzis, Assistant Professor, Political Science, Redeemer College;
Harry Antonides, Research Director Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), Rexdale, Ontario;
Ed Vanderkloet, Executive Secretary CLAC;
Albert Wolters, Associate Professor, Religion & Theology, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario;
Harry Fernhout, Senior Member, Philosophy of Education, ICS;

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Features

How should the church deal with incest?

We asked the Rev. Jack Vos of Covenant Christian Reformed Church of St. Catharines to answer a few questions in relation to the article "An interview with 'Susan' — incest victim."

C.C.: What would be a positive response to the article?

Vos: Take the article seriously. Whenever we come across something ugly, our immediate response is to want to deny that it is real. We become angry, perhaps. If we're not successful denying it, we look for softening circumstances, excuses, and the like. Facts around abuse are helpful to know, even if we have always been connected with warm and secure family life. Facts will help increase our understanding of the victims, our readiness to support them, and our thanksgiving to God for the wholeness we experience in our family life.

C.C.: Why do churches have such a hard time dealing with incest and other forms of abuse in the family? Are we trying too hard to protect the community?

Vos: The church's awareness of the problem has been limited. That is rapidly changing. Undoubtedly, there is resistance. The church is supposed to be the temple of the Holy Spirit and the light of the world. Admitting that terrible evils like incest are present within the church is hard. We, quite rightly, don't want shame to be brought on the body with which the name of Christ is associated.

The only thing is, that when evil does exist, it needs to be dealt with. The apostle Paul told the church in Corinth not to ignore the evil of a man living sexually with his stepmother, but to expose and expel him.

If the action of Classis Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church is any indication, I believe that our churches will become more aware of this problem and train themselves to deal with it as a Christian community should.

C.C.: Do we have to be more open about our sexuality?

Vos: In the Bible sexuality is not taboo, nor is physical touching. At the same time the Bible is sharp in its attack on every form of immorality, from looks to touch, from thoughts to completed acts. Talking frankly about sexuality in our families, together with loving touching, can teach a child to recognize when a word or a touch violates respect and sexual integrity.

Greater openness about sexuality is not the primary key to the solution, however. In



Photo: Degas, the artist's mind
Degas, Interior (The Rape), 1868-1869. Oil on canvas.

abusers we are dealing with distorted persons who really do not understand themselves, or who are unable to deal with other human beings on the level of equality and mutual respect. That is why they have to FORCE someone weaker than themselves to submit. In their abuse they do not imagine what the victim is feeling. Their focus is and remains on themselves. Abusers need to develop self-knowledge and the ability to put themselves in the place of others.

C.C.: Should we be equally concerned about the victim and the abuser?

Vos: The victim has the greater immediate need. That need is deep and many-sided. For those who have never been abused it is hard to understand what a victim needs and why that need should be experienced over such a long period of time. Basic to the response all of us can give them is love: caring for them as people who are valuable in the eyes of God; building them up, and being patient and non-judgmental about those elements in their lives that we don't understand. Remember, their lives are crying out, sometimes screaming out, for wholeness.

The abuser must also become the object of our care. He needs to be confronted. His abuse must stop. He must confess and ask forgiveness. He must come to understand what factors in his life made him commit those despicable acts and speak those wicked words (even if they were Bible texts!).

This ministry will in all

likelihood be more difficult than that to the victim. He will use two powerful defences: denial and self-justification. Christian love for the abuser demands that we persistently seek to lead him to repentance and a change of life.

C.C.: Should victims be encouraged to forgive instead of seeking confrontation and showing anger?

Vos: This dilemma, which people often pose, is based on serious misunderstandings. Behind it is a desire to preserve an outward calm. It also reflects a failure to think clearly about forgiveness and the process of dealing with abuse. Let me make a number of points.

First, who is to be forgiven? The abuser. The person who violated his (her) position of trust, who used his power over a weak and often defenceless victim, who used his victim selfishly, who threatened the severest reprisals and often brainwashed the victim to believe the most horrible of lies about herself, who up to this moment has not taken any responsibility for the destruction and pain he has caused, who will often vehemently deny that he did anything wrong, and justify himself, even with quotes of scripture. Jesus commands in Matthew 18 that we must forgive "70 times seven." Note however, that forgiving is to be done when the guilty party "listens to you," that is, when he confesses his debt, not when he denies his guilt. In the latter case, Jesus says, "Let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax

collector" (Matthew 18:15,17,22).

Second, who is asked to do the forgiving? The victim. The person whose trust was violated during childhood, whose weakness was taken advantage of, whose body was (often systematically) violated, who knew that something was wrong but who was not yet mature enough to recognize that she was being sinned against, who began to hate her body, and who had to tell herself, in order to survive, that this wasn't happening to her but to another person. When we ask a victim to forgive and forget, we are asking that of a person who is just awakening to the terrible evil done to her, who has little idea of what it means to be a valuable and loved person. Those who have had a normal, healthy, loving and secure childhood need to stop and think: of whom are we making the demand to forgive and forget? Shall we then lay on them a demand greater than Jesus asked for in Matthew 18?

Third, do we really believe that anger is bad? Isn't anger against sin normal and healthy? Doesn't the Bible speak about God's anger against sin, even when that sin lodges in the heart of his people? Think of his anger against David or Ananias. Think of the Lord Jesus' anger against the Pharisees, Peter and Jerusalem.

Anger in the victim of abuse is constructive. It is part of fighting for the room to live, room that was denied when another forced himself on her(him). It is part of a healthy response to the evil done to them. As the victim relives what was done to her(him), the

anger is a sign that the victim wants to stop being a victim, that the abuse is seen as outright evil and that the abuser is letting himself be used as an instrument of the devil. It is an anger that says that the victim has been unjustly robbed of a decent childhood and a normal future. It is anger about the years and years of terrible pain, wrongfully inflicted.

This anger does not stay. It may take a long time, but eventually it seems to burn itself out, and the victim experiences a new freedom — freedom to accept the fact of the abuse and freedom to get on with life, to look at the positives in the life of the abuser, and, yes, to forgive. Victims I know all want to forgive. But they also want their hurt recognized, the sin committed against them confessed, and forgiveness asked. A great help for a victim dealing with anger is for the abuser to come forward with a royal confession.

Fourth, confrontation is necessary, both for the abuser and the victim. The abuser may still be abusing. If his children are out of the house, the grandchildren may be in danger. Even more, the abuser needs to be brought to see the evil he has done, to confess, and to seek the help he desperately needs. The victim needs the confrontation to break out of the feeling of being powerless over against the abuser, and to give the anger to the person who awakened it and to whom it belongs.

C.C.: Can pastors deal with these situations or should people turn to Christian counsellors too?

Vos: The question of how to deal with claims of abuse in the church is a difficult one. That's one of the reasons Classis Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church appointed a committee to formulate advice for consistories on that point. I have not yet seen this report but am looking forward to receiving it.

Personally, I would stress that pastors cannot handle this matter by themselves. In fact, there are legal issues involved, and in many situations we are obliged by law to inform the appropriate authorities. As pastors we must remember the nature of our task, which is to administer the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are not psychotherapists, neither by training nor by calling.

We need to listen, carefully and wisely, so that we come to a

Continued on page 13 ...

Following the road towards healing

By this time the reader may have travelled the road to a greater awareness of the presence of incest in our midst by first reading a gentle, introductory interview of Christian counsellor Sam Da Silva by Anne Hutten, then on to the shocking interview — article of Sept. 9 entitled "Interview with 'Susan' —

incest victim" by Patricia Westerhof-Nyman, and finally to Mary VanderVennen's article, "Sexual abuse in Christian families" (Sept. 16). This issue continues the journey with an editorial, responses to the articles in the form of letters and with answers to given questions by the Rev. Jack Vos, of

St. Catharines, Ont. In the near future, a committee of Classis Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church hopes to present a report that will offer guidelines for churches in order to deal sensitively and justly with victims of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and with their abusers. To date, a number of people

have responded by telephone and letter. One matter that repeatedly arose out of these calls was the question of court action. We realized through this that our decision to leave out an important part of the story about "Susan" had been an unfortunate decision. There was in the original copy a reference to a court case, which

we deleted, thinking that it might distract the reader from the main part of the story of abuse and gradual healing. Now we wished we had not left it out, and to make amends, we hereby publish that part of the story. It goes a long way towards answering questions raised by the published version of the article.

B.W.

Excerpt from original manuscript

Patricia Westerhof-Nyman
When did you initiate court action?

After my parents and siblings refused to take me seriously, I contacted the board at the Christian school I had attended. They also laughed at me. At this point, I felt that I had no alternative but to initiate court action. I contacted a sexual assault centre. Soon, the detectives were calling me long distance. The whole procedure lasted from August 1983 to February 1985.

During this time I made various trips to the States. Again I saw God's providence. I had two Christian policemen as my detectives. They were lovely people, very supportive.

My father had an excellent, elderly lawyer. At the preliminary hearing, I was shocked at the way my father acted. He was pounding the table and arguing. Unfortunately, the trial never moved beyond the preliminary hearing. All evidence brought forth in court was dismissed

because prior to hypnosis I could not recall the abuse. The justice system felt that the hypnotist had planted a seed (of ideas) in my mind. I have found out since that in a later case evidence gathered through hypnosis was admitted.

During the preliminary hearing, I was put on trial. My father's lawyer cross-examined me for four or five hours. I was told that I was fantasizing these memories, that I lived like a slut (ironically I was accused of doing everything in my present life that my father used to make me do). I was even told that I had been a seductive four-year-old!

From the preliminary hearings the matter went to a juvenile court, which is not a regular court but a place to heal or protect families. If I could not bring my father to trial, I was interested in at least protecting my sisters, who were 13 and 15 years old at the time.

When my sisters were interviewed at the police station, they both admitted to being abused. The court appearance didn't happen till

two years later, and they were kept at home during that time. On the stand they denied that they had been abused.

My sisters were made wards of the courts for six months, but they were permitted to remain at home. After that, social services checked up on them periodically until they were 18. There was enough evidence for that.

I found out in the court room that my father was made of money and money speaks. Court is so demoralizing for a victim. When some of the things unearthed in court came out into the public eye, about half the members of his church left. I had people calling me long distance thanking me for bringing it out into the open. One church member said, "I am so sorry I never put the bruises together with what was happening to you." And I replied, "Well, that's OK, because that's not something you want to believe about your minister." I was really heartbroken

when the case got dropped; in fact, it affected me so much that I went into what they call "deep psychological shock." I was quickly admitted to the hospital. One week went by and I don't remember a thing, and all of a sudden I came to and I had a straitjacket on! After this point, my treatment degenerated more to a punitive one. I think they were burning out. For a long while I was depressed.

Post Script:

In a telephone conversation with her, "Susan" told me that if she had taken her father to court today, she would have had a much better chance of winning her case. Within a span of five to 10 years, the social climate has changed greatly and judges more readily believe the experiences related by victims of incest.

B.W.

How should the church deal with incest?

... continued from page 12.
good understanding of the need created by abuse. Then we apply the Word to both the abuser and the victim. To the abuser we communicate the appeal and command of God that he confess, repent, and live a new life. To the victim we communicate the love of Christ in reminding her(him) of being an image-bearer of God and a person who deserves to be treated with respect and integrity.

As we minister, we need to be aware that often we just do not understand by what internal process of thinking and feeling the abuser gave himself the permission to engage in abuse. (The abuser himself often doesn't understand, either.) And we need to remember that the shattering effect that the abuse had on the victim is often camouflaged, and so complicated that it takes well-trained counsellors to unravel it and to help the victims rebuild their emotional lives from the shambles left by abuse. Directing both victim and

abuser to responsible Christian counselling is a very concrete way for the pastor to minister in this setting.

That does not mean that he relinquishes his own job. Some pastors, when they have referred members to counsellors, fail to keep up

contact. One of the richest forms of pastoring is to support, with Scripture and prayer, a hurting member who needs specialized help. And he can anchor the love of Christ to those persons simply by so giving of himself.

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A New Creation

Renewal in Christ's Church

A report prepared for Classes Hamilton and Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church by "The Task Force for Renewal": Rev. Jack Quartel, Chairman
Rev. Richard Stienstra
Rev. Jack Vos, Reporter
Dr. Jack Zeyl

Note: The decision to appoint this taskforce was part of the classes' consideration of the issue of CRC members participating in Koinonia-Cursillo.

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Classifieds

Classified Rates	Marriages	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Obituaries
Births \$22.00 Marriages & Engagements, \$25.00 Anniversaries \$30.00 2-column anniversaries \$60.00 Obituaries \$30.00 Notes of thanks \$21.00 Birthdays \$20.00 All other one-column classified advertisements: \$7.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$10.00. Letter under file number, \$10 extra. Photos: \$7.50 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more). Calvinist Contact will not be responsible for any errors due to hand-written or phoned-in advertisements. NOTE: Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in Calvinist Contact will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only \$10! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose \$10 and the couple's future address. Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd. 4261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9; (416) 682-8311.	RANDELL-RUTTERS: Mr. and Mrs. James Randell of Pickering, Ont., and Mr. and Mrs. Evert Rutters of Everett, Ont., are pleased to announce the marriage of their children, CHRISTINE ANNE and ANDREW Rutters. The Lord willing, the ceremony will take place on Saturday, Oct. 8, 1988, at 2:30 p.m. in Alliston Chr. Ref. Church. Rev. S. Cooper officiating. Future address: R.R.#1, Everett, ON L0M 1J0 ZANTINGH-ATTEMA: Joe and Elly Zantingh of Smithville, Ont., are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, ANGELA ELLY to RICHARD ALLAN Attema, son of Dick Attema and the late Ann Attema. The wedding ceremony will take place, D.V., on Saturday, Oct. 15, 1988, at 2:30 p.m. in the Smithville Chr. Ref. Church with Rev. J.W. VanWeelden officiating. Future address: R.R.#2, St. Anns, ON L0R 1Y0	 <i>Congratulations to Gerrit and Jantje Vanderhill (nee Zylstra) who will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary, D. V., in October, 1988.</i>		"Fear not for I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine." (Isaiah 43:1) We, the residents of Parkside Village, are deeply saddened over the passing of our dear sisters in Christ, MRS. S. ARENDS who passed away on Sept. 1, 1988, MRS. J. BOSMA who passed away on Sept. 5, 1988. They will always be remembered with love and gratitude for all they meant to us. May the assurance that they are with the Lord now, be a real comfort to both families. All the residents of Parkside Village, Belleville, Ont. The Lord took unto himself our member MR. MARTIN POSTMUS We pray that the Lord will comfort Mrs. Postmus, the children and grandchildren. Orillia, Sept. 15, 1988. Club "Youth of Yesterday."
Thanks	Anniversaries	1938 October 1988 Apeldoorn Strathroy "Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path." (Ps. 119) This has been the testimony of GERRIT and JANTJE VANDERHILL (nee Zylstra) throughout the past 50 years of their marriage. With gratitude to the Lord, we wish to announce their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations and lots of love from your children and grandchildren: Ron & Gerry Fisher — Whitby Melanie, Tim & Jeanne, Michael, Christine Robert & Inez Vanderhill — Dorchester Janice, Jason Diane & George Roorda — Tallahassee, Fl. Anthony, Daniel, Sheryl, Douglas Herman & Ina Vanderhill — Lambeth Jennifer, Gary, Amy, Susan Jerry & Linda Vanderhill — Sarnia Shanon, Ryon, Stacey We wish to invite relatives and friends to celebrate with us at an open house on Saturday, Oct. 29, 1988, at 2:00-5:00 p.m., at Westmount Church in Strathroy. Home address: 43 Clarence St., Strathroy, ON N7G 1H2	Ermelo, Winchester, the Neth. Ont. 1948 October 7 1988 "If your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here." (Exodus 33:15) With thankfulness to God, we rejoice in the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents, Rev. JOHN and ALICE DEPATER (nee Teunissen) We thank God for blessing us with devoted parents. We pray that God may grant you both many more years of happiness and blessings. Congratulations from: Margo & Jack VanGilst — Finch, Ont. Matthew, Katrina, Benjamin, Luther Bea & Renny VanGilst — Chester-ville, Ont. Stephanie, David, Timothy, Andrew, Daniel Jan & Elizabeth Sampson-DePater — Clayton, Ont. Alice & John Douma — Chester-ville, Ont. Melissa, Jason, Aaron, Thomas, Miranda Stephen DePater — Moose Creek, Ont. James DePater & Barb Piaszka (girl-friend) — Hamilton, Ont. Home address: Rae Road Apartments, Apt. #4, Rae Road, R.R.#4, Winchester, ON K0C 2K0	Real Estate
WASSINK: Thank you to all relatives and friends, for the cards and best wishes on our 35th wedding anniversary. We celebrated in the Rainy River District in seclusion. A special salute to our brood, for the surprise party thrown in London on Saturday night. Sien & Evert Wassink, Forest.	1958 October 7 1988 We are happy to announce the 30th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents, BEREND and JACOBA FIETEN (nee Van Ginkel) We give thanks to God for the many years He has given them together and wish them many more. Congratulations Mom and Dad from your family: Harry & Janette de Groot — Ingersoll Elizabeth Kevin & Nancy Bellin — Thunder Bay Heather Fieten — Ingersoll Curtis Fieten — at home Home Address: R.R.#1, Burgess-ville, ON N0J 1C0 JACK and MINNIE HAVINGA 1943 October 13 1988 It is with joy and thankfulness to our gracious heavenly Father that the Havinga family celebrates the 45th anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grand-parents: "Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children." (Proverbs 17:6) We always thank God for you, especially for your instruction and example to us of the Christian walk. We commend you both in God's continued good care. We love you! Bill & Jenny Havinga Charles & Lisa (Melissa, Christopher), Henry & Tammy (Andrew), Cheryl, Jodi, Amy Martin & Ann Reedyk Vangie, Laurel, Valerie Gord & Marionne Van Gaalen Kim, Karl, Rhonda Glenn & Shirley Havinga Kelley Charles & Renee van de Kamp James Mark Havinga Home address: Jack and Minnie Havinga, Box 685, Fort Macleod, AB T0L 0Z0	1953 September 6 1988 "But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations." (Psalm 33:11) With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord we hope to celebrate the 35th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents, PETER and ELIZABETH ZANDSTRA (nee Ypma) Thank you for all the care and support that you have given us. May God bless you richly with many more years together. With love from: Katherine Zandstra — Thunder Bay, Ont. Freda & Harold Zylstra — Winnipeg, Man. Kara, Lindsay Wendy & Harry Pranger — Thunder Bay, Ont. Lisa Walter Zandstra — Agincourt, Ont. Home address: R.R. #2, Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1	Retire royally on a half acre lot in a scenic rural development near Kingston, Ont. Your new home is a 1344 sq. ft. energy efficient raised bungalow with double garage, built by Royal Homes Ltd. It exceeds Ontario building codes by at least 25%. It is minutes from a golf course — close to Lake Ontario. A good 15 minutes from a Chr. Ref. Church and a major shopping centre. Good garden soil ensures lots of fruit, vegetables and flowers. An early call allows for your selection of style and colour. Phone: S. Brouwer after 4:30 p.m. at (613) 386-3410	
Births	KRALT: Dick and Jackie are pleased to announce the arrival of their son PATRICK JOHN, born at McMaster Hospital on Sept. 12, 1988. Address: P.O. Box 484, Vineland, ON L0R 2C0 SCHALK: Pete and Jane (nee Hamstra), thank the Lord for giving to them their first child, a boy, PETER SAM. He was born on Sept. 8, 1988, weighing 7 lbs., 6 oz. Proud grandparents are Wick and Wilma Hamstra of Strathroy and Peter and Becky Schalk of Strathroy. Home address: 171 Maria St., Strathroy, ON N7G 2X1	Personals		
Marriages	FIJ-GRENKE: Mr. and Mrs. George Fij are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter JOYCELYN-TENA to ALVIN-JOHN Grenke, son of Mrs. Natalia Grenke. The wedding will take place, D.V., on Saturday, Oct. 1, 1988, at 3 p.m. in the Third Chr. Ref. Church, Edmonton, Alta. Rev. H. Vander Beek officiating. Future address: #129-140 Portsmouth Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 1B6 GLAS-BRABENDER: Mr. and Mrs. John Glas of Oakville, Ont., announce with pleasure the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, MARGARET IMKA to STEPHEN PATRICK Brabender, son of Dr. Andrew Brabender of Oakville, Ont., D.V., the ceremony will take place on Oct. 1, 1988, at 7:15 p.m. in the Clarkson Chr. Ref. Church, 1880 Lakeshore Rd. W., Mississauga, Ont. The Rev. William C. Veenstra officiating. Future address: 1297 Marlborough Rd., Apt. 801, Oakville, Ont.	Christian single male, age 22, good looking, wishes to correspond or meet with serious single Christian lady, age 18-24. Non-smoker and preferably near the Ottawa Valley area. All letters will be responded to. Reply to: Calvinist Contact, File #2506, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9 Lonely woman, 47 years old, would like to correspond with a man 47-54 years of age. Looking for man who is able to communicate well, is caring, and loves children. Reply to: Calvinist Contact, file #2505, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9 Christian young man, mid-20s, living in the Kawartha area, who loves country life, wishes to correspond with or meet serious young lady. Reply to: Calvinist Contact, file #2504, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9 Het Consulaat-Generaal zou gaarne in contact willen komen met de navolgende personen: VAN DOORN, Gerardus, geboren op 12 augustus 1926, laatste woonplaats in Nederland: IJsselstein, naar Canada vertrokken op 24 juli 1952. Consulate-General of The Netherlands 1 Dundas St. West, Suite #2106, Box 2 Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3 Tel: (416) 598-2520 Looking for a companion to spend six or eight weeks in Mexico this winter to share expenses. Non-smoker. I am an active pensioner. Letters to Mrs. Lenie Verruyt, 670 Hess Cresc., Victoria, BC V8Z 3N1		

For Church News see page 16...

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Classified/Events

Help Wanted	Help Wanted	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers
<p>Wanted: a young couple to operate a pig farm. 65-70 sows, farrow-to-finish on a share agreement. I have a 4-bedroom house, 4-year-old pig barn and a high moisture corn silo. Apply to: K. Markus, R.R.#1, Woodstock, ON N4S 7V6 or tel. (519) 423-6567.</p> <p>Full-time employment available immediately on a broiler and beef farm in Drayton area. Salary negotiable. Phone (519) 638-2934.</p> <p>Full-time employment available in year-round greenhouse cut-flower operation. Please phone or write: Noordam Greenhouses Ltd., 1140 Edgewood Rd., R.R.#1, Millgrove, ON L0R 1V0. Phone: (416) 689-6761.</p>	<p>Mutual Support Systems invites you to consider an opportunity for service in a Christ-centred program for children ages nine to 18 with emotional and behavioural problems. This family-model program has three homes with house-parent couples and child-care workers living in, except during days off. Couples, and single men and women are invited to consider and apply to: Mutual Support Systems, R.R.#1, Perry Road, Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0; (416) 386-6461.</p> <p>For advertising deadlines see page 17.</p>	<p>CHILLIWACK: Chilliwack Chr. School requires, beginning Jan. 1, 1989, a Kindergarten teacher to teach 25 students half time. Please submit resume to: Mrs. Grace Post, Education Committee, c/o Chilliwack Chr. School, Box 161, Chilliwack, BC V2P 6H6. Phone: (604) 792-6380 (home) or Mr. Norman Brouwer, Principal, (604) 792-4171 (school).</p>	<p>WELLANDPORT: Wellandport Chr. School needs experienced, loving, caring, devoted Christian teacher for a hard working Grade 3 class. Position opens January 1989. Contact: W. Thies, at the Wellandport Chr. School, R.R.#1, Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0 or phone: (416) 386-6272 (school); (416) 892-2155 (home)</p>	<p>LUCKNOW, Ont.: Due to an upcoming maternity leave, Lucknow and District Chr. School is inviting applications for the position of teacher for Grades 3, 4 and 5, from Oct. 17, 1988, to Feb. 10, 1989. Please send resume to: Attie Broer, Principal, Lucknow and District Chr. School Assoc., Box 550, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0</p>
For Rent	For Rent	Vacations	For Rent	For Rent
<p>Two-bedroom apartment in Vineland. Fridge and stove included. \$400 monthly plus utilities. Available Nov. 1, 1988. Phone: (416) 684-4495.</p> <p>Four-year-old mobile home. Available Dec. 15 - Feb. 28. Full bedroom and bath plus Florida room. Bradenton area, Florida. Phone: (416) 451-7886.</p>	<p>2 large, partly furnished rooms in basement, shared bathroom and kitchenette. Ideal for students or nurses. \$200 per room includes utilities. Located north-end St. Catharines. Phone: (416) 934-0866.</p> <p>New mobile home, Orlando area. Available before Christmas, \$150 weekly or \$500 a month. Phone (613) 833-2719.</p>	<p>RICE LAKE Like fishing the big ones? Fully equipped large modern house-keeping cottages, colour TV, sandy bathing area, rec hall, new boats and motors, store, live bait, fishing licences. Campsites available for the week or season. Like a clean, quiet resort? It's all here at the family place. <i>Write or phone for brochure:</i> Lang's Resort and Campgrounds R.R.#3, Box C, Roseneath, ON K0K 2X0 Phone: (416) 352-2308</p>	<p>Office Space for Lease</p> <p>Late this fall the Christian Labour Association of Canada hopes to move into its new facilities now under construction in Mississauga. The two-storey, 10,000 sq. ft. building is located at 5920 Atlantic Drive, near the north-east corner of Highway 401 and Dixie Road.</p> <p>On the second storey there will be 2,000 sq. ft. of office space (separate entrance) for lease at a reasonable price.</p> <p>Those interested should contact: Ed Vanderkloet Executive Secretary, CLAC 821 Albion Rd., Rexdale, ON M9V 1A3 Phone (416) 744-2340</p>	
Events	Events	Events	Events	Events

With thanksgiving to God, the congregation of

Maranatha Christian Reformed Church

Calgary, Alberta,
will celebrate the

25th anniversary

of the ordination into the ministry of their associate pastor

Dr. Jack S. Hielema

An open house will be held on

Friday, October 14, 1988, at 7:30 pm

in the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church

2111-52 Street N.W. Calgary, AB T3B 1C3

Pastor Hielema is at present the Director of Studies for the Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) in Larnaca, Cyprus.

KATWYK'S MALE CHOIR

The male choir of Katwyk is on tour in Canada. This Dutch male choir will be accompanied by two soloists: REINATA HEEMSKERK — alto and JAN VEENJE — piano/keyboards. These 125 voices will bring you an interesting varied program in Dutch and English. **DON'T MISS THEIR CONCERT!!!**

CONCERT SCHEDULE:

October 15: MONTREAL
8:00 p.m., in the Pollack Concert Hall
Tickets \$10.00
For information call Mr. Beckman (514) 697-8179

October 19: OTTAWA
8:00 p.m., in the Dominion Chalmers United Church
Free will offering
For information call Cor Hoogeveen (613) 224-1597

October 21: KINGSTON
8:00 p.m., in the St. Georges Cathedral
Tickets \$8.00 and \$6.00 seniors and students
For information call Gerard Moraal (613) 546-3376

October 25: HAMILTON
8:00 p.m., in Hamilton Place
Reserved tickets \$15.00, seniors and students \$10.00 at the door, if available. 10% off parties of 25 people or more.
Box office & telephone orders open Sept. 17
Box office information:
Mon. - Fri. 9:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.; Sat. 9:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Hamilton local: 645-3266, (Hamilton Place and Cops Colliseum); 521-0371 Ticketmaster (formerly BASS)
Toronto local: 872-BASS
All others: 1-(416)-645-3266, 1-(416)-521-0371.
Use your Visa or Mastercard.
Subject to service charge.
For information call Astrid ten Haaf (416) 627-3634.

October 28: TORONTO (Christian Festival Concert)
8:00 p.m., in the Roy Thompson Hall
SOLD OUT!
Part of the Ontario Christian Music Assembly.
For information call Leendert Kooy 636-9779.

CANADIAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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Topic: "WORKERS WITHOUT TOOLS" - "SCHOOLS WITHOUT TEXTBOOKS"

AYLMER
Wednesday, October 5

PLACE: Aylmer Christian Reformed Church
Caverly & South Street
TIME: 8:00 p.m. sharp!

This rally is cosponsored by Immanuel Christian School-Aylmer and Ebenezer Christian School-St. Thomas

WOODSTOCK
Thursday, October 6

PLACE: Central United Church
32 Riddel Street
TIME: 8:00 p.m. sharp!

This rally is cosponsored by John Knox Christian School-Woodstock

NEPEAN - OTTAWA
Friday, October 14

PLACE: Woodvale Pentecostal Church
205 Greenbank Road
TIME: 8:00 p.m. sharp!

*This rally is cosponsored by the following Christian Schools:
Athens-Brockville-Metcalf-Ottawa-Redeemer, Ottawa-Renfrew-Williamsburg*

ATTEND ONE OF THESE LOCAL RALLIES IN YOUR AREA. WE PROMISE YOU A WONDERFUL EVENING OF PRAISE AND CELEBRATIONS. COME WITH THE ENTIRE FAMILY, but come early! SEE YOU THERE..... A FREE WILL OFFERING WILL BE TAKEN DURING THE PROGRAM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHER MANUALS

For more information contact our...

Executive Director, Fred R. Vander Velde
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(416) 336-5619

CANADIAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION INC.



Classified/Events

October 1, 1988 - 8:00 p.m.
Redeemer College Auditorium
Organ Concert
DELBERT DISSELHORST
Superbly gifted performer and organ professor from the University of Iowa, featured recitalist at the Houston 1988 Convention of the American Guild of Organists.
Tickets: Single: \$9.00; Seniors/Students: \$7.00

January 28, 1989 - 8:00 p.m. Organ Concert
Christiaan Teeuwssen
Tickets: Single: \$9.00; Seniors/Students: \$7.00
Series Tickets: Regular: \$15.00; Seniors/Students: \$11.00
For tickets call: Redeemer College - (416) 648-2131

Prairie drought may affect grain collection

WINNIPEG, (Canadian Foodgrains Bank) — Canadian food-aid organizations back its annual collection of donated grain in western Canada because of the worsening drought situation.

Each fall, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank invites grain farmers to donate a portion of their wheat crop for relief and development projects overseas. The CFGB arranges for the collection and shipment of grain to the needy on behalf of a coalition of nine Canadian church denominations. During the past year, 76,000 tonnes of wheat, corn, lentils, cooking oil and other products were shipped to 11 countries.

Last year, the CFGB Grain Drive brought in over 11,000 metric tonnes of donated wheat at 50 collection points.

"It's a concern to us that crop conditions are not good," commented Bert Loewen,

Executive Director of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. "Many farmers may be unable to donate this year."

While the prairie wheat harvest topped 26 million tonnes in 1987, recent estimates suggest the 1988 harvest might drop as low as 16 million tonnes.

One bright spot is the recent landmark agreement reached between the CFGB and the Canadian Wheat Board which allows farmers to donate wheat at most local elevators, rather than trucking it to designated collection centres. This opens up the possibility of collecting donated grain at many more centres across the prairies.

As a result, a projected drop in the size of donations to the CFGB during the Fall, 1988 Grain Drive may be balanced by an increase in the number of farmers who choose to give because of the added convenience of access to the local elevators.

"We realize that the farming community is under great economic pressure because of the drought. We want to be sensitive to their plight," Loewen noted.

For that reason, firm plans for the Fall, 1988 Grain Drive will not be formulated until farmers and grain industry representatives have been consulted about the final impact of the drought on farmers' capacity to give.

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of nine Canadian church denominations.

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Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Declined
— to Rehoboth,
Bowmanville, Ont., Rev.
Philip Stel of Bethel, London,
Ont.
— to Holland Marsh, Ont.,
Rev. Jacob Wieda of Granum,
Alta.

Accepted
— to Kemptville, Ont., Rev.
Dick Velthuisen of Drayton,
Ont.
— to Transcona, Winnipeg,
Man., Cand. Rodney Gorter.

Canadian Reformed Church

Called
— to Bedforddale, Western
Australia, Rev. P.K.A. De
Boer of Carman, Man.
— to Providence,
Edmonton, Alta., Rev. R.
Aasman of Ancaster, Ont.

Accepted
— to missionary work in
Brazil (Hamilton, Ont., calling
church), Cand. John Kroeze.

Classified/Events

Ontario corn reaches destination in Mali

WINNIPEG, (Canadian Foodgrains Bank) — A food aid shipment of 1,500 metric tonnes of Ontario corn reached its destination in the villages of drought-stricken Mali in southeastern Africa during the last week of June.

The corn shipment, valued at \$700,000, was organized by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank on behalf of a coalition of Canadian church denominations. It was weighed and bagged by hundreds of volunteers from southwestern Ontario communities during a "Corn Bagging Operation" in March.

Its arrival was confirmed in a

late-afternoon phone call from Bob Ehmann on June 30. Ehmann, Field Director of Gospel Missionary Union work in Bamako, Mali, phoned the Canadian Foodgrains Bank head office in Winnipeg with the good news.

"Everything arrived safely and it looks like no sacks were lost," Ehmann reported. The 50 kilogram sacks — over 30,000 of them — were shipped inland aboard large trucks. One truckload was delayed by a road accident.

Distribution of the food aid appeared "highly organized" by local church and village leaders, Ehmann said. Each

person in line was receiving 10 kilograms of corn, enough to survive for about one month.

"There is just no food here right now," Ehmann reported. "This corn came at the perfect time and it's meeting a real need."

He added that after months of scorching drought, some rain has fallen and crops are being planted. The Canadian food aid will help bridge a serious food shortage until harvest time in October.

Ehmann expressed his gratitude to the Canadian volunteers and donors who made the shipment possible. "It gives us a wide open door" to demonstrate what Christian love is really about, he said.

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of nine Canadian church denominations. Last year the CFGB shipped 76,000 metric tonnes of Canadian food aid, valued at \$26-million, to relief and development projects overseas.

Calendar of Events

- Oct. 1-
Nov. 18
- Enjoy the works of an artist from the Christian community whose landscape imagery expresses nature around us. See Peter Buwalda's works at the Redeemer College Art Gallery, **Ancaster, Ont.** For info call: (416) 648-2131.
- Oct. 4
- CHP, Riding Perth/Wellington/Waterloo, nomination meeting at 8:00 p.m. in the **Alma Township Public School** (Newry just off Hwy. 23).
- Oct. 5
- CCEF Chr. Education Rally at 8 p.m., CRC, **Aylmer, Ont.** Speaker: Rev. John D. Hellinga.
- Oct. 6
- CCEF Chr. Education Rally at 8 p.m. in the Central United Church, **Woodstock, Ont.** Speaker: Rev. John D. Hellinga.
- Oct. 7
- "Organ and Trumpets" featuring the Brouwer brothers and Andre Knevel. At 8 p.m., Queen St. United Church, **Lindsay, Ont.**
- Oct. 7-9
- 25th Anniversary Celebrations of Timothy Chr. School, **Barrie, Ont.** Starts Friday at 7:30 p.m. Open House and Banquet on Saturday. Special service on Sunday. For info. call (705) 436-5496.
- Oct. 8
- "Organ and Trumpets" featuring the Brouwer brothers and Andre Knevel at 8 p.m., Maranatha Can. Ref. Church, **Fergus, Ont.**
- Oct. 8
- Smithville Chr. School dedication evening. Open house from 7-8 p.m., followed by ceremony at 8 p.m. in the auditorium of the **Smithville District Chr. High school.**
- Oct. 12
- RCBPA Hamilton Chapter Break fast meeting at 7 a.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster, Ont.** Speaker: Dr. John Bolt on "What does it mean to be Reformed in business?" For reservations, call (416) 524-1203.
- Oct. 13
- "Organ and Trumpets" featuring the Brouwer brothers and Andre Knevel. At 8 p.m. at Redeemer College, **Ancaster, Ont.** Tickets: \$7.50/regular, \$5.00/seniors and students. To reserve call (416) 643-3151.
- Oct. 14-16
- Singles' Conference at Camp Shalom, **Cambridge, Ont.** Cost \$85. For info. call (416) 433-4041, 383-0978 or 259-6573.
- Oct. 14
- "Organ and Trumpets" featuring the Brouwer brothers and Andre Knevel. At 8 p.m. First CRC, **Sarnia, Ont.**
- Oct. 14
- 25th Anniversary Celebration of the ordination of Dr. Jack S. Hielema, at 7:30 p.m. in Maranatha CRC, **Calgary, Alta.**
- Oct. 14
- CCEF Chr. Education Rally at 8 p.m., Woodvale Pentecostal Church, **Nepean, Ont.** Speaker: Rev. John D. Hellinga.
- Oct. 15
- Open House from 2-5 p.m. at Mount Hamilton CRC, **Hamilton, Ont.** to celebrate Rev. Raymond J. Sikkema's 25 years in the ministry.
- Oct. 15
- 29th Annual Meeting of the All-Ontario Diaconal Conference. From 9 a.m. till 4 p.m. at John Knox Christian School, **Brampton, Ont.** Twenty workshops. For registration material, contact your deacons.

Events

Events

Fifth Annual
Senior Citizens Day at Redeemer College
Monday, October 31, 1988
9:30 a.m.

All Seniors Welcome!

Join us for a day of worship, fellowship, and fun. Enjoy music of the organ, flute and voices of the Redeemer College Choir.

Hear Dr. John Bolt speak on "The Future of the Church in the 21st Century: What do we tell our Children and Grandchildren?"
Lunch - \$7.50 per person
Please contact Redeemer College at (416) 648-2131 if you plan to attend.

25th anniversary of ordination!

With thanksgiving to God, the counsel and congregation of

Mountainview Christian Reformed Church of Grimsby, Ont. congratulate both

Rev. Adrian A. Van Geest (Sept. 12) and **Rev. Peter W. De Bruyne** (Sept. 19) with the 25th anniversary of their ordination into the ministry.

May the Lord continue to bless them with many more years in His service. We hope to celebrate this occasion with an "Open House" on **Saturday, September 24, 1988, from 3 - 5 p.m. at the church, 275 Main St. E. (Hwy. #8)**

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Fri. Oct. 21	Tues. Oct. 18	Wed. Oct. 12-8:30a.m.	Thurs. Oct. 13-8:30a.m.

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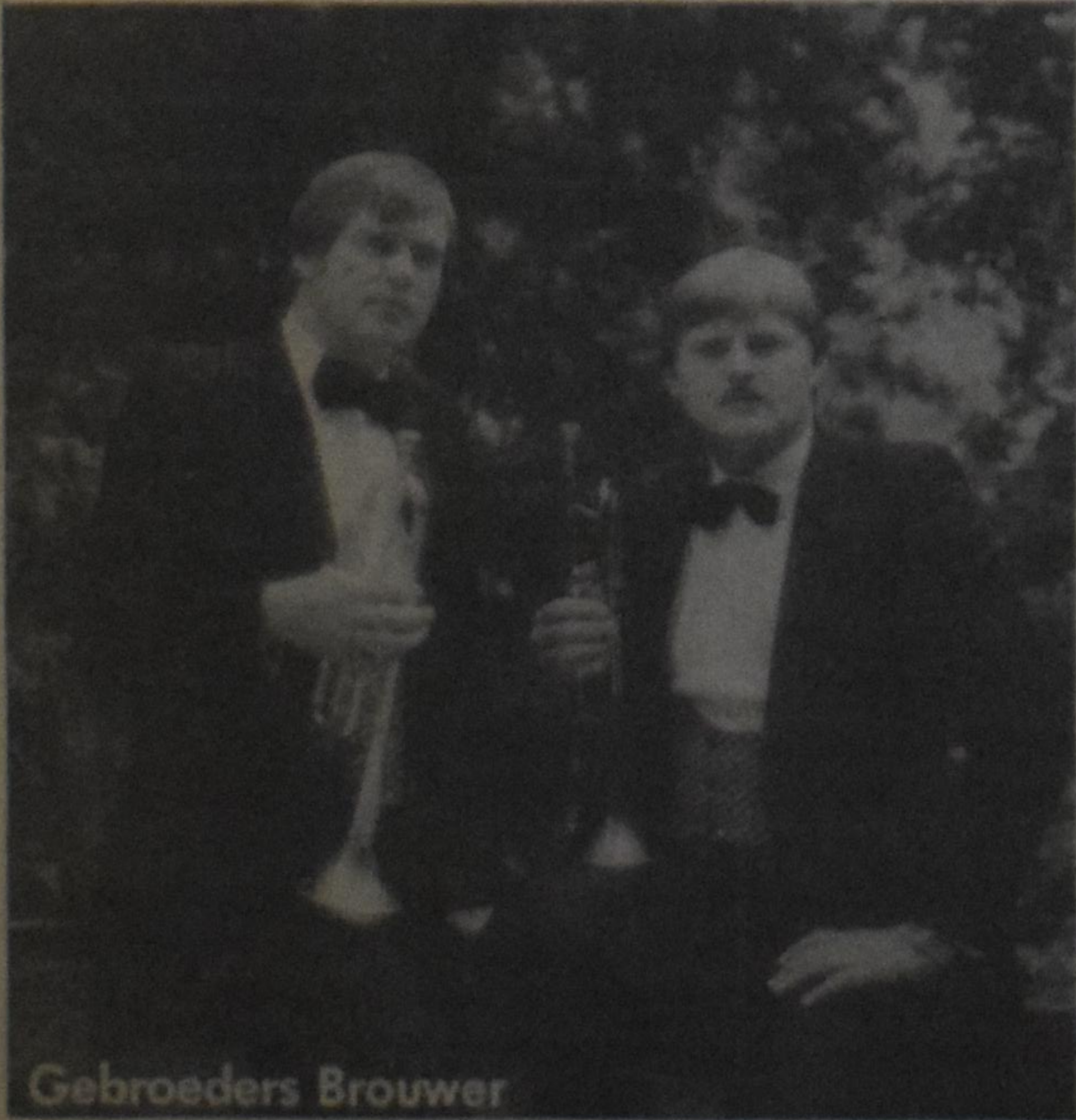
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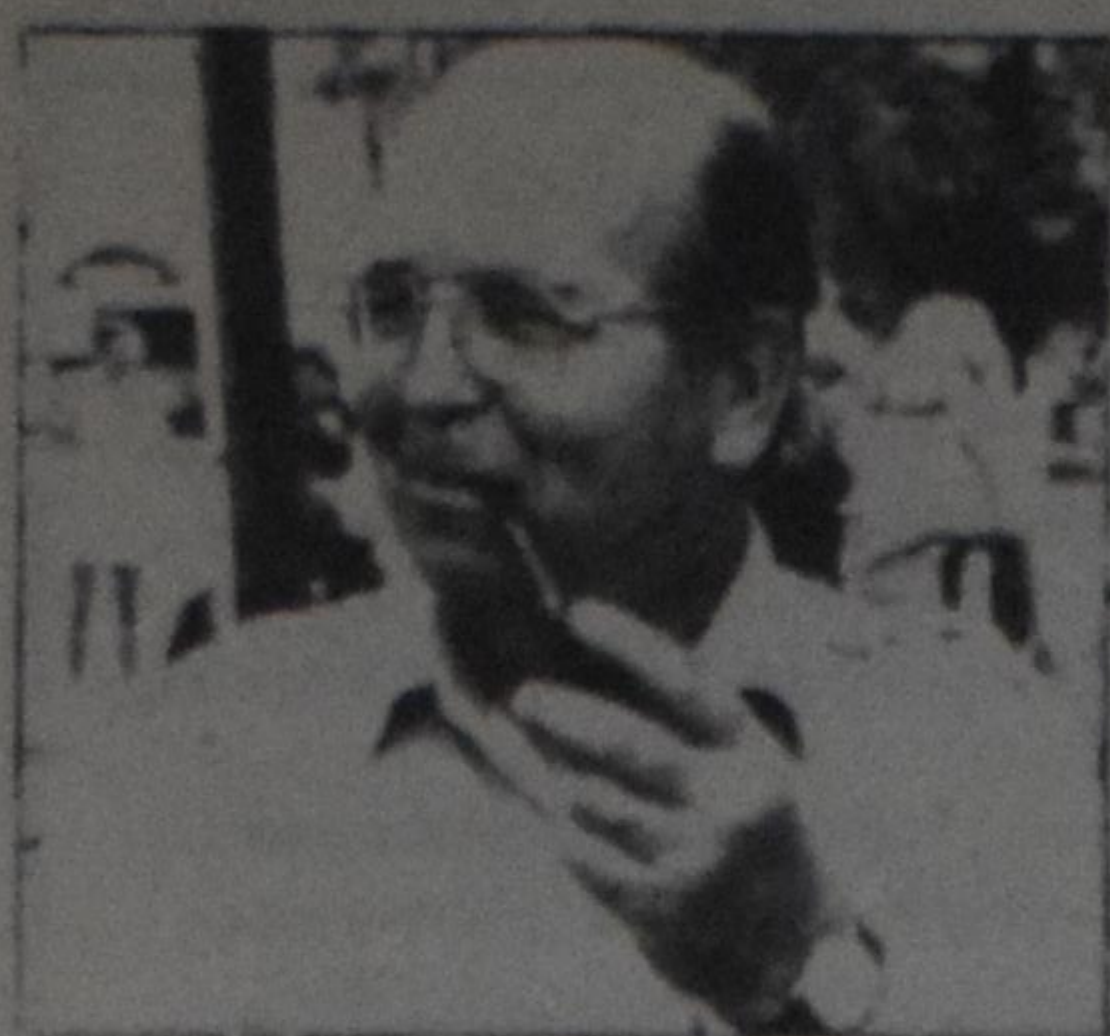
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Dutch



Kommentaar met een knipoog

Herman de Jong

Och heden, nog an toe ...

Zo begint er één van de vele brieven die ik mocht ontvangen naar aanleiding van mijn vorig artikel over "Ouderenzorg". De schrijfster gaat verder; wat vind ik dat mooi, dat u om de oude mensen denkt. Weet u, de oude mensen worden wel eens wat vergeten. Meestal gaat het om de jongeren en dat is heel goed. Maar er zijn veel eenzame oude mensen.

Och, heden, nog aan toe! Wat ben ik begonnen! Elke dag komen er 4-5 aanvragen binnen voor het bandje met Hollandse geestelijke liederen, de meeste begeleid door heel mooie lange of korte brieven. Wat stel ik dat op prijs! Maar ook ... hoe moet ik die allemaal

beantwoorden? Al gauw ben ik overgegaan tot een gezamenlijke brief met persoonlijke voetnootjes. Ik kan toch geen 100 keer neerpennen dat ik ook getrouwd ben en van de tuin hou en zes en een half lieve kleinkinderen heb?

In al die brieven zijn er dingen die opvallen. Voor het merendeel zijn de schrijfters en schrijvers dankbaar dat de Heer het zo voorspoedig met hen maakt. Er spreekt grote trouw en grote dankbaarheid uit al die honderden zinnen. Men is trots op kinderen en kleinkinderen. Niet omdat ze zulke goeie posities hebben of dat ze zo ontzettend veel studeerden, maar omdat ze de

Heer volgen. Dat is toch voor vele ouderen het belangrijkste.

Tot dusver geen kritiek op mijn stukjes in C.C. Misschien schrijf ik niet scherp genoeg? Ach, je leert het ook, natuurlijk. In het verleden mocht ik graag af en toe een dik woord gebruiken. Nee, dat wordt niet gewaardeerd. Ook haal ik geen moeilijke dingen tevoorschijn, om de eenvoudige reden dat zulke dingen ook mij ver boven de pet gaan. Het leven is al moeilijk genoeg!

Laat ik nu sommige schrijvers aan het woord laten.

Mrs. H.F. te A. schrijft: Ik ben groot gebracht in de Gereformeerde kerk, maar we zijn nu al heel lang lid van de Presbyteriaanse kerk. Ik hou

nog veel van de oude Hollandse psalmen en gezangen, die waren aan de orde van de dag vroeger.

Mrs. A.D.V. te C: Ik ben nog geen oude vandage, maar toch luister ik graag naar christelijke liederen. Ik ben lid van Friendship. Het is een prachtig program. Het is zo fijn om deze kinderen te mogen vertellen van de liefde van Jezus, ook voor hen.

Mrs. A.V.H. te C: Ben nog niet zo oud dat ik op een stoel kan gaan zitten om mee te zingen. We hebben nog een teenager thuis. Dus u ziet wel dat ik graag al *werkende* met uw bandje mee wil zingen, ondanks dat ik nog niet zo oud ben. U weet wel, dat een vrouw niet graag haar leeftijd wil

zeggen. Met dit schrijven stuur ik u \$10.00, maar behoef maar één bandje te hebben, de andere kunt u weggeven aan iemand die het wel graag zou willen hebben maar het niet betalen kan (dat heb ik inmiddels gedaan, hoor!)

R.B. te B: Met een kopje thee en de nieuwe C.C. ging ik in de tuin zitten. (Wat een prachtige weken hebben we in de natuur). Wat u schrijft is waar, er is veel eenzaamheid, verdriet en pijn. Ik werk als volonteer in HCH en de meeste mensen daar mogen daar graag wonen, en zijn dankbaar voor alles wat ze van dag tot dag ontvangen mogen, in velerlei vorm, in en met elkaar. Persoonlijk ken ik u niet, maar ik ben net 60 geworden, dus ongeveer uw leeftijd. Wie weet worden we nog eens bureu over een 20 jaar in HCH. (HdJ: ik denk dat ik er al eerder zit)

Meneer J.V.E schrijft als P.S.: Als ik me niet vergis gaat uw zoon naar Redemer, zo is onze jongste. Welterusten. Twaalf uur! Ik kom net thuis van de kerkeraad.

M.W. te G: Nu, vanmorgen las ik dat u bandjes maakt en verkoopt. Wij, mijn man en ik, wonen in Alberta. Hij heeft 35 jaar lang gewerkt maar is nu retired. 't Zijn gezellige stukjes die u schrijft.

M.J.H. te D: My husband and I love to listen to tapes while we're travelling in our car and it will be nice to sing or hum the old verses we learned in school 50 odd years ago. We're not quite senior citizens yet, but we too still love our Dutch language. We've lived in Canada since 1950. (HdJ: het spreekt vanzelf dat mensen die de pensioen-gerechtigde leeftijd nog niet bereikt hebben ook om bandjes kunnen vragen tegen dezelfde prijs. Vooruit maar! Voordat u er op verdacht bent krijgt u ook 10% korting en een senioren-kaart voor de bus.)

Dit is dan de laatste keer dat ik over ouderenzorg schrijf in een artikel. In het vervolg worden nieuwe bandjes aangeboden in een advertentie die naar ik hoop geplaatst zal worden in de Nederlandse pagina. Er komt nog wel meer uit de bus, reken maar! Maar ik kan onmogelijk alle brieven uitgebreid beantwoorden, alhoewel ik dat graag zou willen doen. 't Duurt nog 8 jaar voordat ik zelf met pensioen ga. Hartelijk dank voor uw fijne belangstelling. Ik ben blij dat ik in een behoefte mag voorzien.

Herman de Jong woont in Jordan Station, Ont.



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Pensive Dutchie

Syrt Wolters

Toen we weer thuis kwamen van een verblijf van ruim drie weken in Nederland werd ons deze vraag verscheidene malen gesteld. Vaak was mijn prompt antwoord: "Erg nat!" We hadden slechts drie regenloze dagen. Gelukkig maar dat we niet specifiek naar Nederland gegaan waren voor het weer; hoewel zonnig weer een stuk plezieriger geweest zou zijn.

Natuurlijk wilden de vragers meer weten omtrent het leven in Nederland. Er werd beweerd dat de werkeloosheid nogal groot is; zelf hebben we daar niet veel van gemerkt, maar we hebben wel de indruk dat, als iemand werken wil, er nog vele mogelijkheden zijn.

B.v.: Onze 23-jarige zoon, die sinds december een reis om de wereld maakt en totaal platzak in Nederland aankwam, wilde werk zoeken in Nederland om zodoende z'n "reis-wallet" wat bij te vullen. Hij vroeg — en kreeg — een werkvergunning. Daarmee ging hij naar één van de vele "uitzend-kantoren" en vroeg om werk. Hij kreeg direct werk, eerst hier, dan daar, maar hij was nooit zonder. Zodoende werkte hij vier maanden en had hij z'n geldbuidel weer in redelijke conditie. Toen ging hij verder reizen, maar niet voordat z'n laatste baas hem zei: "Als je eind september weer in de buurt bent, heb ik nog zes tot acht weken werk voor je." We zijn er vrij zeker van dat hij dan wel "in de buurt is." Waarmee ik maar zeggen wil: als je werk wilt hebben en niet kieskeurig bent aangaande het soort werk, of waar te werken, dan schijnt er nog volop werk te zijn.

Zo te zien schijnt Nederland een welvarend land te zijn. Wat ons weer opviel is, dat de huizen er zoveel vriendelijker uitzien dan bij ons in Canada. De huizen mogen dan kleiner zijn dan die wij gewend zijn, maar de Canadese huizen en tuinen kunnen niet halen bij de gezellige woningen in Nederland. Huis en tuin zijn daar een eenheid. Onze stad Victoria heeft zeker geen gebrek aan prachtige huizen en exotische tuinen, maar ze zijn op geen stukken na zo uitnodigend vriendelijk.

De welvaart komt ook tot uitdrukking in het groot aantal auto's. Zoveel zelfs, dat men er bijna geen raad mee weet. De huizen hebben geen garages en de straten zijn te nauw om de auto op straat te laten staan. Daarom hebben de gemeentebesturen elk stukje publieke tuin omgezet in een parkeerterrein voor zo'n half dozijn auto's. Iemand krijgt de indruk, dat meer dan 90% van de auto's mini-wagentjes zijn.

Een grote Amerikaanse wagen zou een hindernis zijn. Geen "parkeervak" is berekend op zo'n grote wagen.

De regering schijnt al het mogelijke te doen om het autoverkeer op de grote wegen te verminderen door het reizen per trein zo aantrekkelijk mogelijk te maken. Het spoorwegennet in Nederland is fantastisch. De maximum snelheid voor auto's is 100 km per uur. Niemand schijnt zich eraan te storen; men rijdt praktisch allemaal 120 km per uur. Maar terwijl men 120 km rijdt, zie je ineens dat een trein je inhaalt en met een snelheid van 150 km er vandoor gaat. En het zijn niet die hoestende, ratelende, schuddende treinen van weleer, maar slanke, elektrische treinen, die over autogenisch gelaste rails voorbij glijden.

Op maandag 1 augustus gingen m'n zoon en ik een dag uit om de Deltawerken te bezien. We gingen per trein van Hoogeveen naar Rotterdam, een slordige 200 km. We vertrokken om 6 uur en kwamen in Rotterdam aan om 8.15.

De conducteur vertelde ons dat we in Amersfoort moesten overstappen. Ik vroeg hem hoeveel tijd we hadden. "Twee minuten", zei hij. "Twee minuten?", vroeg ik. "Ja meneer, en u hebt nog tijd over." Precies op tijd stopten twee treinen aan weerskanten van een perron. De deuren gingen automatisch open van beide treinen en elke wagon had een gereedstaande wagen aan de overkant van het perron. Het nam niet meer dan 30 seconden om "over te stappen"!

Het bezoek aan de Deltawerken is de moeite waard. Het wordt niet zonder reden het achtste wereldwonder genoemd. Wat daar gepresteerd is tart alle

beschrijving. Het is dan ook geen wonder dat elke rechtgeaarde Nederlander er met recht trots op is. Wat daar aan technisch vernuft te zien is, is nergens in de wereld te zien.

Ik dacht dat een hefkrana met een vermogen van 80 ton al heel wat was. Bij de Deltawerken hebben ze hefkransen met een hefvermogen van 18,000 ton! Massieve constructies van beton, 25 meter breed en 50 meter lang en vijf verdiepingen hoog, werden netjes op hun

plaats gezet op de bodem van de zee — alle 35! En er mocht niet meer speling zijn dan 20 cm!

Er zou nog veel meer over te vertellen zijn, maar er is geen beginnen aan om volledig te zijn. Intussen zijn de Deltawerken een internationale bezienswaardigheid geworden van de bovenste plank. Duizenden bezoekers van over de hele wereld staan paf als ze dit stuk van menselijke techniek in zich trachten op te nemen. Ik kan het aan een ieder

die een reis naar Nederland overweegt aanraden, om daar een bezoek te brengen. U zult niet teleurgesteld naar huis gaan.

De volgende keer hoop ik u van mijn indrukken te vertellen aangaande het geestelijk klimaat in Nederland.

Syrt Wolters, part-time kapper, part-time gepensioneerd, woont in Victoria, B.C.

"Hoe vond je de situatie in Nederland?"

Why not place your ad here?

Naast elkaar staande, groeien we samen.

In Canada zijn we rijk door onze medemensen. We bouwen het beste op een geest van eenheid, rassenharmonie en gelijkwaardigheid.

Onze nieuwe Wet voor Multiculturalisme verplicht de landelijke regering om tegen alle vormen van rassen-vooroordel en discriminatie te vechten.

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Naast elkaar staande, groeien we samen.

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Books/Politics

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

International relations

Gorbachev writes on the U.S.S.R.

Perestroika: New Thinking for our Country and the World, by Mikhail Gorbachev. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1987. Hardcover, \$27.95, 288 p. Reviewed by David T. Koyzis.

Two significant events are occurring in the Soviet Union at this time. The first is the celebration of 1,000 years of Christianity in Russia. The second consists of the sweeping reformist agenda enacted by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev which has been labelled *perestroika*, or "restructuring," and *glasnost*, or "openness."

These two events are not unconnected. The fact that the millennial celebrations are occurring at all bespeaks a more tolerant political spirit in that country.

It is in this context that the General Secretary has written the present *apologia* for his current attempts at reshaping the communist system in the Soviet Union. The first half of the book consists of a defence of his current reformist policies on the domestic front. The second half deals with foreign policy and includes discussions of Soviet relations with the major countries and regions of the world.

Despite Gorbachev's

expressed desire for change in these areas, we should not be surprised that he takes pains to portray himself as the true heir of Lenin and to emphasize the continuity between his own policies and the official philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. Although he has written much of his book with Westerners in mind, the latter emphasis is undoubtedly aimed at skeptics within his own Politburo. It also underscores the probability that his reforms will be less radical than many of us would like to see.

Lacks discussion of religion

One looks in vain, for example, for any significant discussion of religion and the protection of religious minorities. Western Christians naturally hope that the current relaxation will bode well for their brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union. At present, the government does seem to have loosened its grip on the church to at least some extent.

Lest we get our hopes too high, however, we should recall that Moscow has previously allowed greater freedom to the churches and then tightened its control again when it has suited its purposes, even under the tsarist regime.

It may be that *perestroika* and *glasnost* will prove to be little more than the latest version of de-Stalinization, liberalization and Westernization. And, like these previous episodes, the present campaign could meet a similar fate as a new wave of conservatism and retrenchment takes its place.

On the other hand, if Gorbachev's reform efforts meet with success, the Soviet Union may find itself moving into the next century with a stronger economic base and a more open social system. Which of these is the more likely scenario? At this point it is impossible to say. Even if Gorbachev is sincere in wishing to purge his country's political system of its more repressive elements and to institute a more humane policy, hardliners within the Politburo may not let him get away with it and he could share Khrushchev's fate. Indeed the rising expectations inevitably produced by promises of reform could unleash forces (such as the recent riots in Armenia and Azerbaidjan) which the rigid Soviet system may not be able either to control or to withstand.

Public affairs

The U.S. constitution after 200 years

Liberty and Law: Reflections on the Constitution in American Life and Thought, edited by Ronald A. Wells and Thomas A. Askew. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. Pbk., \$19.95, 174 p. Reviewed by David T. Koyzis, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

The presence of two non-Americans makes this volume particularly valuable. Paul Marshall, of Toronto's Institute for Christian Studies, and Johan van der Vyver, of the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, are familiar to the Reformed community in North America. Together with Richard Pierard's essay on the German constitutional experience, these help to give the collection an international flavour.

Of particular interest to Canadians is Marshall's essay,

"Anglo-Canadian Perspectives on the U.S. Constitution," which describes the traditional Canadian "Tory" perspective on the American political experiment. Indeed, from the Tory viewpoint, a constitution cannot be limited to the words of a single document but also includes the complex of political traditions and conventions which are generally accepted as binding on political decision-makers.

Van der Vyver's essay deals partly with the United States, but mostly with his own South Africa, and especially with the new presidential regime which has been in place since 1983. Personally, I found this essay the most intriguing.

If a constitution is intended to limit the possibility of arbitrary government and to protect the rights of citizens, then South Africa's constitution has failed.

Moreover, van der Vyver effectively shows that the type of statist meddling required by the apartheid ideology is clearly incompatible with the Calvinistic sphere sovereignty.

The weakest essay, in my opinion, is that of Pierard, who rather too easily champions the "separation of church and state" principle as the best guarantor of religious freedom. Constitutional scholars have long noted the historic tension between the "no establishment" clause and the "freedom of religion" clause of the first amendment in the American Bill of Rights, but Pierard does not acknowledge such a tension.

Indeed, legislative and judicial attempts to maintain the "wall of separation" between church and state have effectively curbed religious freedom, in the opinion of many observers.

Among Americans, the U.S. Constitution has attained something of the character of sacred writ, an attitude which is naturally foreign to Canadians. This collection helps to place in perspective a document which, though remarkable for its longevity and flexibility, was and remains a fallible human enterprise.



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Children (II)

"The promise is for you and your children ..." (Acts 2:39)

What does baptism mean for a child? Is it a magical thing that guarantees salvation?

Sometimes I get calls from people who want me to baptize their children. They are not members of our congregation, and usually have little or no contact with any church. But they "want their children to be done," sort of like bringing them to the dentist: in by 10:00, out by 11:15; virtually painless! Or, as one person said, sort of like meat on a barbecue grill: How do you want it — rare, medium, or well-done?

For such people baptism is the magician's wand, a kind of mystical rite that costs them nothing but surrounds their child with an aura of sanctified grace and protection. But there's nothing of that in the Bible.

It was a different and beautiful story, some time ago, when two young parents called me from a hospital here in London and asked me to come and baptize their baby that seemed about to die. I went and talked with them for a while; they knew that the child was safe in the arms of Jesus, with or without the sacrament. Baptism did not *make* her a child of God. Baptism *confirmed* publicly her special place in the heart of God, a comfort to hurting parents.

Is baptism a "christening," as some call it? There is a history behind that term: of days when tribes were evangelized and changed their pagan names to "Christian" or biblical names in a mass baptism. But recently, christening has become more a formal display, a first outing for the young child, a first opportunity to be viewed by the world. Baptism is certainly much more than that!

Well, then, is it a dedication? It is when parents bring a child to church and say, "Here, Lord, here's our child! We know that you had a part in bringing her into our lives, so now we want to dedicate her to you! We hope that you will bless her! We pray that you will guard her! We trust that you will look after her with us!"

Is that what it is?

No, baptism is much more than that!

Past, present, & promise

In baptism, God does at least three things:

First, He gives the child a past.

What's the first thing people do when they see a new baby? They try to find in her features a link with her heritage. Does she have her mother's eyes? Isn't that Opa's chin? Her mouth is just like her father's.

Pat Garratt once said, "A baby is all our tomorrows and some of our sunsets. He's got Uncle Fred's ears and great-grandma's nose. A baby is roots and the family united. The promise is fulfilled."

But where we all see that in a physical way, baptism confirms it in a deeper, more profound spiritual sense. When a child is baptized, God gives her a history, a family that is as old as the human race and as big as the world. The baby may delightfully reflect all the beauties of her mother, or he may be burdened with great-grandfather's rutabaga nose. But in baptism God brings him or her into all the joys and sorrows of his family.

The child shares in the sin of Adam and Eve, but she carries with her also the faith of Abraham. She becomes part of the singing family of David and the compassionate devotion of the daughters of Ruth. She gets a picture in the photo albums of the saints, right next to Deborah and Barak and the little girl who was carried to Syria as a slave — the one who told her mistress about the God who could heal master Naaman. She is there with the young lad who shared his little lunch with Jesus' disciples, so that the crowds on the hillsides could eat.

When God reaches down and lays his hand on a child in baptism, He brings her into his family in a real and living way. She has a past on which to grow!

(More next week!)

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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